

MINUTES OF THE MEETING Full Council HELD ON Monday, 21st July, 2025, 7.30pm – 9.15pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Anna Abela, Peray Ahmet, Ibrahim Ali, Kaushika Amin, Emily Arkell, Dawn Barnes, Nicola Bartlett, John Bevan, Barbara Blake, Mark Blake, Zena Brabazon, Cathy Brennan, Lester Buxton, Dana Carlin, Liam Carroll, Luke Cawley-Harrison, Pippa Connor, Eldridge Culverwell, Lucia das Neves, Isidoros Diakides, Erdal Dogan, Scott Emery, Ruth Gordon, Mark Grosskopf, Makbule Gunes, Mike Hakata, Holly Harrison-Mullane, Marsha Isilar-Gosling, Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Sue Jameson, Anna Lawton, Ahmed Mahbub (Mayor), Mary Mason, Khaled Moyeed, Sean O'Donovan, Felicia Opoku, Ajda Ovat, Ruairidh Paton, Sheila Peacock, Reg Rice, Michelle Simmons-Safo, Adam Small, Anne Stennett, Joy Wallace, Elin Weston, Matt White, Sarah Williams and Alexandra Worrell

17. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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

18. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Corporate Director for Children's Services advised the meeting of the following apologies:

Cllr Johnson
Cllr Adamou
Cllr Ibrahim
Cllr Collett
Cllr Rossetti
Cllr da Costa
Cllr Chandwani
Cllr Elliott
Cllr Dunstall

19. 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. These were as follows:

Item 7) Report on Proportionality and Appointments to Committees
Item 9) Report from the Standards Committee
Item 11) Questions and Written Answers
Item 12) Motions

Item 7 was late as there was a need for political group consultations on the appointments to committees following the changes to the political composition of the Council.

In relation to the Standards Committee report under item 9, this was late to allow some minor clarifications, and these recommendations required consideration prior to the November Council meeting.

In relation to Item 11 Questions and Written Answers - The reason for lateness was that notice of questions was not requested until 10 clear days before the meeting, following which the matters raised have to be researched and replies prepared to be given at the meeting.

Item 12– Motions - The amendments to motions were not requested until 10am on the day of the Council meeting and an amendment to Motion B had been received which had been published and distributed in the tabled pack.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest put forward.

21. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19TH OF MAY 2025

RESOLVED

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 19th of May 2025.

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

The Mayor reported on his mayoral activities and engagements and the meeting noted that there had been 67 engagements attended by the Mayoral team. The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor and former Mayors for helping spread the presence of the mayoral office across the borough. The Mayor had emailed all councillors his communications and continued to highlight the following:

- The local football team, Tottenham Hotspurs winning the Europa League and the London Mets, which was based in Finsbury Park, winning the national baseball championships.

- A year of celebration, with the Antwerp Arms turning 10, Jackson's Lane turning 50, Lordship Lane Primary School turning 120 and resident Dorothy Holderness of Hornsey Lane turning 106.
- A range of civic events including opening Pride Month, Windrush celebrations, Armed Forces Day flag raising and remembering the Genocide in Srebrenica.

The Mayor took this opportunity to thank the backbench councillors for attending and representing Haringey and in particular thanked Cllr Peacock and Cllr Bevan, who had attended nearly every civic ceremony.

The Mayor was saddened to hear of the passing of the following former councillors: Alan Richardson, Vince Gillespie and Charlie Sharpe. The Mayor offered the Council's condolences to the family and friends of these former councillors.

He called on Cllr Peacock, Cllr Weston and Cllr Luke Cawley Harrison to speak in their memory.

Cllr Peacock outlined her memories of the three former councillors who, although, had only served on the Council a short time, had continued to be in contact with her through their continuing activities in the community.

Cllr Peacock outlined that Vince Gillespie, was elected in 1986 as a councillor and had stood down in 2002. Vince Gillespie was a key figure for positive images in Haringey and had been the chair of the Council's Lesbian and Gay Committee. She described Vince as a keen Spurs supporter who was proud of his working-class roots. After standing down from the Council, Vince had continued to play his part in local community activities working with fellow residents.

Cllr Peacock outlined that Alan Richardson was elected to the Council in 1998 and served one term as he was a very busy lecturer teaching trade union studies.

Cllr Peacock continued to speak about Charlie Sharpe who had been elected to the Council as a Crouch End Ward Councillor in 1994 and served until 2002. Cllr Peacock had met with him most recently in 2024 when he had asked if he could have a stall for the University of the Third Age, at an event that Cllr Peacock had organised on an annual basis.

Cllr Weston spoke of her great sadness of having to speak of the passing of former councillor, Charlie Sharp. Charlie Sharp was a Labour councillor and had a very keen interest in planning and had previously served as vice chair of the Planning Committee. It was noted that planning in the built environment became long standing interest for Charlie Sharp which he continued to pursue in recent years, acting as secretary to the Crouch End Neighbourhood Forum and convening the architecture group in the local University of the Third Age.

Cllr Weston expressed that Charlie Sharpe was committed to his community, and a Hornsey resident of over 40 years. Charlie Sharpe had been a governor of Highgate Wood School and remained active in the local branch of the Labour party.

Cllr Weston continued to remember Charlie Sharpe as knowledgeable and an extremely helpful member of the local Labour group's Middle Lane premises Committee. He had been a consistent source of support for her and councillor colleagues in Hornsey Ward.

Cllr Weston expressed that Charlie Sharpe was a gentle and steadfast presence, unfailingly polite and truly kind. He was universally liked and respected.

Cllr Weston continued to offer the Hornsey Labour Group's deepest condolences to Charlie's wife Kay, family and friends.

Cllr Cawley – Harrison, Leader of the Liberal Democrat, offered his condolences to the family of Charlie Sharp. Cllr Cawley- Harrison, recollected first meeting Charlie when he first became a councillor in 2018 and through his role as a member of the Crouch End Neighbourhood Forum. He noted that Charlie was a founding member of the Forum and served on the executive committee right through until he retired from it.

He noted that Charlie had always been warm and welcoming to him, following his election, despite being a member of a different political group, and had always been informative, helpful and incredibly knowledgeable, especially on all matters relating to Crouch End. He expressed that former Liberal Democrat Councillor David Winskill, spoke of a similar experience with Charlie Sharpe and remembered him as an absolute fountain knowledge. He was seen as fun, engaging and a breath of fresh air. David Winskill and many of the Crouch End residents went on to work with Charlie Sharpe for many years after that locally, in the Neighbourhood Forum and University of the Third Age.

Cllr Luke Cawley - Harrison concluded that Charlie would be very sorely missed.

The Mayor led the meeting in a one-minute silence in memory of former councillors: Alan Richardson, Vince Gillespie and Charlie Sharpe.

23. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Corporate Director for Children's Services introduced the report which was asking the Council to note the political composition of the Council following the changes to political groups and to agree that Cllr Paton replace Cllr Dogan on the General Purposes Committee.

The Chief Whip MOVED the recommendations set out in the supplementary agenda pack and it was,

RESOLVED

1. To note the changes to the political balance of the Council set out at paragraph 4.3.
2. To note the formation and membership of the Green Socialist Alliance set out at section 4.

3. To agree that Councillor Paton will replace Councillor Dogan on the General Purposes Committee, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group, and in accordance with paragraphs 4.10, 4.14 and 4.15.
4. To note that Councillor Collett will continue on the Strategic Planning Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.
5. To note that Councillor Mark Blake will continue on the Licensing Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.
6. To note that Councillor Mason will continue on the Audit Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.

24. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER AND DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

The Monitoring Officer had no matters to report on.

25. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING BODIES

There was a report from the Standards Committee outlining a change to the Pensions Committee and Board terms of reference.

The Chair of Standards Committee MOVED the recommendations set out in the report and it was,

RESOLVED

1. To approve the deletion of the provision for appointment of the Vice Chair by the Pensions Committee and Board set out at Appendix 3 and for the reasons set out at paragraph 6.11 in the attached Standards Committee report of the 30th of June 2025 at Appendix 1.
2. To approve the updated terms of reference for Pensions Committee and Board for publication as outlined at Appendix 4.

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

The Mayor announced that he had received a deputation from the coalition of Latin Americans in the UK. This group worked across London and Manchester and were well-established community partners with the Wards Corner Community Plan and had previously worked jointly to address the needs of Haringey's Latin American residents.

The Mayor invited Jacobo Belilty and Vicky Alvarez to make their deputation to the Council which was about supporting the later motion on recognising the Latin American Community in Haringey.

The deputation spoke about this being an important moment for the Latin American community in Haringey in London and in the UK.

The community had been in the country for decades, spanning first, second and even third generations of Latin Americans, and even given way to something called British Latino, a form of culture that combined what Britain has and what Latin American can offer.

The deputation expressed that the proposed motion provided recognition was to a community that had contributed so much locally and in the borough in Haringey.

The deputation spoke about their personal experiences of coming to the country and sharing their culture in the borough. The cultural vibrance and joy that the Latin American community brought to the borough was now well established and was due to the community continuing to share their culture despite being invisibilised.

It was hoped that the meeting would continue to agree to officially recognise Latin Americans as an ethnic group and continue working with the community in achieving official recognition at a national level.

The deputation highlighted that the Latin market in Seven Sisters was about to re-open in the coming month and this was a huge achievement for the community.

The Latin American community was described as hard working and resilient and proud to be part of Tottenham.

It was noted that the Seven Sisters market has been closed for the past four years, and it was a significant achievement that all the traders are coming back to the market.

The deputation continued to translate in Spanish their deputation.

There were questions to the deputation from Councillor Mason and Cllr Barbara Blake and the following information was shared by the deputation.

It was noted that coalition of Latin Americans in the UK was established in 2012, and the group Latin American Women's Rights Service were founding members of this coalition and continued to be part of the steering group as well.

With regards to the range of services, the members of the coalition provide, there were women's rights organisations that provided gender-based violence support, members who provide legal advice, services on immigration, on employment support. There were members that provided education services for children and young people and range of holistic services.

The Mayor called the Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy to respond to the deputation.

The Cabinet Member was really proud to welcome the deputation and recognised the continuing effort of the community to get recognition and she was glad that the Council were able to positively respond to this with all of the traders of the market present.

The Cabinet Member was aware of the coalition's significant work for bringing forward this recognition, and highlighted the vital work that the coalition does in order to address some of the socio economic issues that face this particular community, ranging from representing the community for fair and equal employment contracts, and advocating for fair access to health and encouraging participation in civic life, including voter participation.

The Cabinet Member emphasised that the cultural and economic values that Latin American businesses bring to Haringey were hugely important. They were described as a key part of Haringey's economy, and the Council wanted to see these businesses increase and thrive, especially in South Tottenham.

The Latin American community were part of the diverse communities in Haringey, but until now there had been no formal recognition of this community's existence. Recognition was important and could ensure that the interests of the community was known and that the community had an equal voice in the borough.

The Cabinet Member was delighted that the Seven Sisters Market was re-opening in the very near future and asked the deputation to stay in the meeting to hear the outcome of the motion and debate on recognising the Latin American community in Haringey.

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

There was a public question put forward to the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport to respond.

The Mayor invited Ruby Sleight to ask her question which was as follows:

Speaking on behalf of the group supporting plant-based catering in the Council, it was highlighted that the group had been urging the Council, for over 2 years, to fulfil the commitment in the Climate Action Plan from 2020/21 to develop policies around promotion of vegetarian and vegan food in order to mitigate the greenhouse gas emissions caused by animal agriculture.

In March 2023, the group had asked the full Council to fulfil its net zero commitment by ensuring that catering at internal meetings and events was fully plant based. The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport, along with many other councillors representing Haringey residents, had showed support at that meeting but no action was taken yet.

In February 2024, the group asked the full Council again to take action on its commitment and they were not yet aware of any actions that had been taken on these urgent climate targets.

The Council were having good conversations about the need to tackle agricultural emissions as a key part of the borough's journey to net zero, but the group were yet to see any evidence that these were being put into action.

The questioner highlighted that animal agriculture, including meat, eggs and dairy, was responsible for the same quantity of global warming as all transport systems globally. Yet whilst there were many efforts to decarbonize energy and transport sectors, there was little political action on decarbonizing the food industry.

The questioner warned that the borough would not be able to meet the climate targets of net zero if the consumption of meat and dairy products continued. Plant based agriculture was a simple and well proven solution to this issue. Plant based diets had been shown to produce 75% less greenhouse gas emissions and use 54% less water and use up to 10 times less land than animal alternatives. This in turn freed up the land for rewilding and nature restoration, allowing the country to meet national targets to reverse species loss and draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

The questioner highlighted that other London boroughs, including Lewisham and Enfield had already committed to fully plant-based catering for all their internal meetings and events. Camden Council were in the process of making the change.

The Mayor advised the questioner that she had increased the detail in her written question and that she would need to ask the written question put forward.

The questioner continued to conclude her question, highlighting that residents were living through heat waves and droughts, soaring food prices and widespread loss of biodiversity. This was while policies continued to be debated with no tangible action, there was no time for further deliberation on this simple and well proven suggestion. The group had been advised that the Cabinet Member had been in favour of implementing this change and asked for confirmation at the meeting that the Council will stop buying and serving animal products.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport responded as follows:

Acknowledging that the questioner and group's advocacy demonstrated the politics of care, where individual and collective choices about food reflected deeper values. He expressed that this was about environmental stewardship and social justice, and the politics of care, was fundamentally about expanding the spaces where individuals can make a difference. The Cabinet Member expressed that the Council shared the groups commitment to sustainable food systems.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that the Council were implementing substantial measures through Haringey Food Action Plan, which provided a strategic framework for tackling food insecurity and promoting healthy, sustainable eating across the

borough. The Council's approach focused on building the social infrastructure where plant-based choices could flourish naturally.

It was noted that the Council were proud partners of transformative projects like Eat Wood Green at Wood Green Library, where the Council were creating community led food, growing spaces and had an ongoing collaboration with the Wolves Lane Centre consortium led by Organic Lee and the Ubele initiative which continued as a vital hub for sustainable food production and education.

The Cabinet Member outlined that rather than mandating specific dietary approaches, the Council were creating the enabling conditions for residents to make informed, sustainable food choices. The Council had maintained policies for sustainably sourced food procurement and were now expanding community access to local food growing through urban farming initiatives. The evidence suggested that sustainable food transitions happened most effectively when they emerged from community values and local action.

The Cabinet Member welcomed working with the questioner and group to explore how the Council could further embed plant-based options into food systems, whilst respecting the diverse dietary needs and cultural culinary delights right across the borough.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the challenges put by the questioner as this represented community leadership which makes environmental progress possible.

Ruby Sleight, sought further clarification on whether agreeing to the Council's internal catering becoming plant based could be a community led initiative and could this be tackled by the Council?

In response to this clarification point, the Cabinet Member reiterated that a community approach method was being taken forward within the Council and it was being requested that Council staff approach this similarly to residents of the borough and promote sustainable food practices. This could not be a mandated approach.

The Council continued to RECEIVE the response to written questions.

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

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

The Mayor asked Councillor Gordon, Cabinet Member for Placemaking and the Local Economy to propose Motion A, recognising the Latin American Community in Haringey.

The Cabinet Member outlined that Latin America, American and Latin Caribbean Residency formed an important part of Haringey's cultural landscape, and there was a

growing Latin American population in Haringey as well as this community being ranked 6th in London in terms of size and community representation.

It was noted that in the 2011 census and by 2021, the number of residents had doubled to more than 10,000. This gave Haringey the third highest Latin American population, after Lambeth and Southwark.

The Cabinet Member described the political and Council journey to reach this point spanning over a number of years. She expressed that there was a vital need to retain a cultural hub for Latin Americans in the borough and was pleased with the return of traders to the Seven Sisters market.

The Cabinet Member hoped and believed that Seven Sisters market would be a focal point for Latin American and Latin Caribbean culture, not just for Haringey but for the whole of the capital. This motion was one more welcome step to recognising the cultural heritage and value of this community.

Councillor Ovat, Cabinet Member for Communities, seconded the motion referring to Haringey as one of the most diverse boroughs in London and highlighted how the administration have striven to ensure the borough is a welcoming borough, one where people from all walks of life can build a future and contribute to a shared community.

The Cabinet Member spoke about councillors in Haringey reflecting and representing communities in the borough they serve and recognising the Latin American community in Haringey was necessary, and long overdue.

The Cabinet Member expressed that the Latin American community had a rich, proud and enduring presence in Haringey which was woven throughout the borough reflected through from the thriving small businesses to the arts. They were an active community organising vibrant cultural events.

There was a need for their voices to be heard and for the community to feel valued, supported, and to ensure that communities were fully represented in decisions that shaped the borough.

The motion was another step forward so that the Latin American community can now proudly identify as Latin American instead of needing to identify as white other, removing statistical invisibility.

The Cabinet Member expressed that the coalition of Latin Americans in the UK had done incredible work for the community in achieving recognition across 4 London boroughs so far.

The Cabinet Member spoke about the established aims and achievements of the community networks concluding that Haringey not only celebrated diversity but built on it.

There was a debate in accordance with CSO 15.1.

Councillor Emery supported the motion and spoke about moving to Haringey and encountering such a rich and vibrant community and recognition was a core part of maintaining identity as a community. There was reference to the joint political party motion in 2018 on defending migrant communities and those fleeing conflict abroad.

Councillor Emery spoke personally of his Latin American friends who had spoken to him of their home and sharing the common theme of togetherness. and culture

Councillor Emery expressed that the Latin American community had chosen to be part of Haringey, and the Council should be taking great pride in this and should not be taking this for granted as trust could be easily broken, and it was important to remain a welcoming place for all people and communities.

It was noted that Casa De La Salud, Hispano Americana, was the only Latin American organisation working in Haringey for more than 15 years and recently, they started closing services due to the lack of support and funds. In addition, the Tottenham Carnival, had not happened during the last few years, and was previously a good showcase of the presence of the community locally through the arts. It was hoped that with the borough of culture activities that there would be opportunities for working more closely with the Latin American people and a request made to review returning this activity.

Councillor Emery spoke about Haringey being known and recognised for its diverse community and a place where everyone belongs. He concluded that this was a borough where richness was cultivated by everyone, bringing different strengths and backgrounds to the table.

The Mayor called for Councillor Gordon, Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy to provide a right of reply.

The Cabinet Member hoped all Councillors would vote to support the motion and thanked Councillor Emery for his support.

There followed a vote on Motion A, Recognising the Latin American Community in Haringey which was unanimously AGREED.

Recognising the Latin American community in Haringey

Proposer: Councillor Ruth Gordon

Seconder: Councillor Ajda Ovat

This council notes that:

- The Latin American community is one of London's fastest growing and is among the largest non-UK born populations.
- Latin American is used to define an ethnic group encompassing people from countries in North, Central and South America, as well as the Caribbean, who share common cultural, historical, and linguistic roots.

- It is a highly diverse community, comprising people from many different countries and migration statuses, and UK-born second-generation or first-generation local descendants.
- The Latin American community in Haringey has grown significantly over the past decade. Haringey ranked 6th in London for Latin American population according to the 2011 Census. By 2021, this number had more than doubled to 10,012 residents, making Haringey the third borough for Latin American population in London - after Lambeth and Southwark.
- Latin Americans are not recognised as an official ethnic category in the UK Census, and are routinely placed in the “Other” ethnic group, resulting in statistical invisibility.
- Despite high rates of education and employment, Latin Americans face low pay and workplace exploitation. 70% earn less than the London Living Wage and they are concentrated in low-paid sectors, particularly cleaning, hospitality and care work.
- Lack of monitoring makes it more difficult to understand the take-up, targeting and effectiveness of public services. During Covid-19, Latin Americans were excluded from national monitoring.
- Other London boroughs, including Lambeth, Southwark, Islington, Hackney and Newham, and the Greater London Authority, have officially recognised Latin Americans and include the category in ethnicity monitoring.
- We are proud of and grateful for the contributions made to our local workforce, cultural sector, and community and civic infrastructure by residents from a range of Latin American backgrounds.
- The contribution of the Latin American community in Haringey is particularly evident at the Seven Sisters Market. Otherwise known as ‘Latin Village’, the Market plays a strong role in Tottenham’s identity and history and has a unique economic, social and cultural value for Latin Americans across London and the diverse communities that live and work in Tottenham.

This Council believes that:

- Residents from across Latin America have made Haringey their home in increasing numbers and play a valuable and welcome role in the borough.
- Low pay and workplace exploitation contribute to multiple challenges for Latin Americans, including child poverty, housing insecurity, poor mental and physical health and barriers to public services, especially for families and carers.
- Poor access to translated information, limited engagement from some public services, and language barriers severely affected outcomes during Covid-19 and continues to do so in other areas.
- Inclusion of Latin American as a category in the monitoring forms of the Council and its partner organisations will help ensure services are appropriate and effective.
- National recognition of Latin Americans, particularly by the Office of National Statistics, would ensure effective comparison across public agencies.
- The re-opening of the Seven Sisters Market is a significant moment for the community, Council and Borough, and is testament to the resilience and tireless campaigning of the market traders and Seven Sisters Market Tenant Association.

- The Community Plan has laid the foundations for a new gateway to Tottenham that directly responds to its existing social and cultural fabric and protects the tangible and intangible heritage of a celebrated and unique community asset.
- Learning from the Market's original success, the Community Plan will deliver new much-needed low-cost retail, small business, community and cultural space in the heart of the West Green Road/Seven Sisters town centre.

This Council resolves to:

- Officially recognise the Latin American community in Haringey.
- Add a Latin American category to internal and external monitoring forms across council services.
- Engage with Haringey residents from a range of Latin American backgrounds to understand how to best represent them in our categorisations
- Develop a programme of work with staff across the organisation to promote the use of equalities monitoring forms and robust data collection for all our residents.
- Work with London Councils and the GLA to implement a consistent Londonwide approach.
- Support the inclusion of an official Latin American category in the next UK Census.
- Share data on the local Latin American population with community groups in accordance with the principles of GDPR.
- Work with other communities that are or feel excluded from council and wider categorisations to better reflect their identity.

Motion B Thames Water

Councillor Barnes proposed the motion, outlining the appalling state of Thames Water with, both councillors and residents seeing a significant increase to water bills for a very poor service.

Councillor Barnes highlighted the recognised fact that 25% of water never reached homes, with high reportage of leaks across streets, resulting in road closures with increased traffic and diversions across the borough to repeatedly fix the same leaks.

Councillor Barnes reflected on the current sense of delusion at Thames Water at the magnitude of the issues faced by customers and demonstrated by Sir David Montague, appearance before the Environment Select Committee where he had advised them that the company's most precious resource was the senior management team. This team had continued to be massive bonuses despite the significant issues.

It was noted that last year there were significant sums handed out in shareholder dividends and bonuses which was almost five times the average salary of a Haringey resident. Meanwhile, the infrastructure had not received the investment, improvement or maintenance that it so desperately needed. In addition, there were also reports of poor water quality of rivers and seas due to frequent sewage spills.

It was also reported that sewage spills were up by 60% in just one year with Thames Water responsible for almost half of those spills. Thames Water were responsible for likely casting a doubt in the enjoyment of beach side water leisure activities.

Councillor Barnes commented that there was likely political agreement that the situation with Thames Water was policy disaster but in her view the way out from this policy situation was more uncertain and she commented that it would be interesting to see which of the 88 recommendations from today's government report would be taken forward. It was clear that customers should not be bailing out these companies with ever increasing bills while shareholders and senior executives received generous payouts.

Councillor Barnes noted that the government had made some first steps in recognising the problem and abolishing the regulator but more action regarding Thames Water was needed as there was no confidence in this company and they should be placed in special administration.

Councillor Barnes concluded by asking all councillors to support the motion unamended and allow the government to respond to the published report to improve water across the UK.

Councillor Connor seconded the motion, emphasising the points made on widespread sewage spills, paying out dividends and the failure to meet even the most basic environmental standards in 2024. She referred to the report in the local press of 200 sewage spills in local waterways and resulting pollution which was posing a risk to the local environment, wildlife and residents, public health.

Councillor Conner highlighted the significant debt of Thames Water and that it was not able to invest enough funding in critical repairs or upgrades which meant leaking pipes remained unrepaired and sewage infrastructure remained overwhelmed.

It was further noted that in 2024, Thames Water was attempting to persuade the regulator to let it raise customer bills by up to 40% over the next five years. This meant that in Haringey residents faced an unfair equation with a worse service, more pollution and higher bills.

Councillor Connor spoke about having stricter regulations and tougher enforcement. as fines were not enough. She felt that the fines should also be accompanied with mandated repairs and environmental cleanups.

Councillor Connor reiterated the need to hold the Chief Executive and Board of Thames Water to account and there was a need for real transparency. She expressed that sewage data should be in the public domain and in real time as residents had the right to know about their rivers. In addition, the Council would need to demand better performance from regulators in supporting customers and users of services.

It was noted that the government had announced today the abolition of the OFWAT and that it was to be replaced by one single water regulator responsible for the entire

water system. There was a need to see the details to understand how this would substantially reduce pollution without passing the costs on to residents.

Councillor Connor concluded by commenting on the need to reconsider the ownership model of water provision as clean water was a right, not a privilege, and polluted water should not be the price paid for corporate failure.

The Mayor had received an amendment in accordance with Council Standing Orders and called on Councillor Hakata, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment and Transport to move the amendment.

Councillor Hakata outlined that the purpose of the proposed amendment was to strengthen the resolutions and to support nationalisation of this provision. The amendment also underlined the work that the government was already doing questioning Thames Water executives and to oppose the increased payment and unjustifiable bonuses.

Councillor Hakata concluded that residents deserved better than the toxic combination of environmental destruction and financial exploitation and urged all Members of the Council to support this amendment.

Councillor White seconded the amendment adding that the ownership structure of Thames Water and similar organisations was usually the same mix of private equity, pension funds and sovereign wealth funds and all these institutions had a common aim, which was to maximise the profits on their investment, and this was prioritised above other considerations. In the case of Thames Water, this seemed to come ahead of quality of service, environmental protection and long-term investments in the network. It seemed that these matters would only have been considered if they helped to generate greater returns.

Councillor White made the wider point that the results of privatisation of the national infrastructure from social housing to water, energy, transport, had been that infrastructure had been allowed to crumble, whilst bills increased to the benefit of overseas investors, pensioners and governments. This was happening across the economy and across infrastructure. He felt that critical national infrastructure like water supply could not be allowed to be in the hands of investors who sought profit. Councillor White expressed that only nationalisation could provide a model for water and other national infrastructure that prioritises long term investment, quality of service and environmental protection which the amendment supported.

In accordance with CSO 15.1 Councillor Luke Cawley – Harrison spoke in the debate referring to the past Liberal Democrat national campaigns on this matter and expressing that he found the report from the government published today as underwhelming with more action needed. He questioned the focus of the amendment and referred to the serious pollution incidents that had risen by 60% last year with Thames Water, as the worst offender, and the difference in policy of regulation being applied which questioned the commitment on tackling pollution.

Councillor Cawley- Harrison expressed that the government had not made any mention of ending the private monopoly over water supply and noted that public or

mutual ownership must be part of the solution. He noted that whilst the amendment did reference this, there was still the issue of Thames Water being able to borrow billions, not pay fines and increase bills by up to 50%. This needed urgent action coupled with an overhaul to the water system.

In accordance with CSO 15.11(a) Councillor Barnes responded and thanked councillors for their contributions to the discussion, which had highlighted shared views on the scandalous performance, accountability and ethics of Thames Water. Councillor Barnes noted that nationalisation of water services was the preferred option in the amendment to the motion. However, there were other options such as the community model as customers were mainly concerned about results rather than how a service was run. She emphasised that the Liberal Democrats had led on this issue and urgent action was needed bonuses for executives still continued. Councillor Barnes concluded by calling councillors to support the motion unamended and seek support from the Labour government on the actions listed in the motion.

Following a vote on the amendment to Motion B, this was AGREED

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

Thames Water

Proposer: Councillor Mike Hakata

Seconder: Councillor Matt white

Council notes that:

- Between 2010 and 2018, under the Coalition and subsequent Conservative Governments, funding for Ofwat - the regulator of water companies - **reduced by over 25% in real terms.**
- Between 2010 and 2018, under the Coalition and subsequent Conservative Governments, funding for the Environment Agency - the environmental pollution watchdog - was **cut by more than 50% in real terms.**
- The current Labour Government has a) introduced legislation which for the first time blocks bonuses to executives of water companies responsible for polluting UK rivers; b) handed the Environment Agency its largest ever yearly budget of more than £189 million to tackle polluting water firms; c) presided over the largest fine ever administered to a water company (Thames Water) for environmental breaches and unjustified dividends; and d) launched the Independent Water Commission under Sir Jon Cunliffe to explore long-term reform of the water industry, which has just advised the scrapping of Ofwat and fundamental reform.
- The Water Act 1989, which privatised existing water authorities and was opposed by both the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats, made England and Wales the only countries in the world with a fully-privatised water and sewage disposal system;
- Despite the government writing off the debts of the water authorities and injecting over a billion pounds of public money into the new private companies,

- those companies had, by 2024, accumulated £60 billion of debt whilst paying out £78 billion in dividends;
- Thames Water is the worst performing water company according to the Consumer Council for Water;
 - After securing a £3 billion 'rescue loan' at an interest rate of 9.75% earlier this year - despite a legal challenge led by Liberal Democrat MP, Charlie Maynard - Thames Water's debts stand at over £19 billion, the highest of any UK water company;
 - In May 2025, Thames Water was hit with £123 million in fines from Ofwat – the largest ever administered - including £104 million for environmental breaches involving sewage spills and £18 million for paying out unjustified dividends;
 - Thames Water has been allowed dispensation to increase customer bills by 35% by 2030, despite its poor performance;
 - Thames Water currently loses around one quarter of its drinking water through leaks in its own system, and leaks are frequently not properly repaired;
 - Water companies dumped raw sewage for a record time of 3.61m hours into seas and rivers in England in 2024, according to data from the Environment Agency;
 - Thames Water has paid out millions of pounds in bonuses to its executives in recent years, and Adrian Montague, the company's Chairman, recently told the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Select Committee that "we have a bonus scheme to protect our most precious resource, which is the senior management team."

Council believes that:

- The Labour Government faces a generational challenge to bring investment in public services up to a standard that meets increased need and demand for services across the UK;
- The Government has inherited failing industries across Steel, Rail, Energy and Water and has taken radical steps to protect jobs and consumers and improve standards.
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- The crisis at Thames Water is the result of over a decade of profiteering, underfunded regulation, poor management and a direct consequence of water companies being allowed to prioritise dividends and debt over investment and resilience;
- The privatised water model in England and Wales - unique in the world - has failed. It has enabled companies to load up on unsustainable debt while stripping out value, leaving customers with higher bills, broken infrastructure, and polluted rivers;
- The government's Water (Special Measures) Bill was a welcome first step - strengthening the regulator and blocking bonuses for executives who pollute the UK's waterways;
- Ofwat should be replaced with a far stronger regulator, which is needed regardless of whether companies are public or privately run;
- Creditors - not customers - must bear the costs of failure. Any rescue of Thames Water must be on terms that prioritise customers, public health, and

environmental standards and not the financial returns of investors. Its future ownership and governance model must reflect those priorities;

- The government should not support Thames Water's efforts to apply for more loans unless it can guarantee that the taxpayer will not end up being liable for repayment further down the line;
- Proposed bill hikes are totally unjustifiable given both Thames Water's dreadful performance and the cost-of-living crisis severely impacting Haringey residents;
- The continuing failure of Thames Water to properly address leaks, resulting in days of road closures around the borough as the same problems are patched again and again instead of solved, or repair sites are left unattended by Thames instead of being prioritised for fixing and reopening, is unacceptable;
- Thames Water management's attitude to billpayers is contemptible, and no executive should receive bonuses whilst the company they run's performance is so poor.

Council resolves to:

- Declare that it has no confidence in Thames Water;
- Write to the Secretary of State for Environment outlining the impact Thames Water's dire performance, sewage mismanagement and unacceptable bill hikes are having on Haringey residents;
- Call on the Government to place Thames Water into Special Administration to enable the writing down of unsustainable debts and to protect customers from bearing the cost of corporate failure;
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- Express the Council's strong support for nationalisation - rejecting the current system of private monopoly provision, towards one that puts the public first, prioritises long-term investment, environmental protection, and meaningful accountability to customers and communities, including through representation on company boards;
- Express categorical opposition to the payment of unjustifiable bonuses to Thames Water executives until such time the company has made measurable progress on basic performance and environmental standards;
- Write to Thames Water in relation to ongoing leaks and pollution incidents across Haringey, demanding a clear timetable for repairs and resolution at these sites, and better communication with affected residents.
- State unequivocally that Haringey residents must not be made to pay for the failures of Thames Water or the wider privatised water system;
- Reject the proposed 35% increase in customer bills by 2030 to buttress a record of failure, and call for any restructuring plan to put the interests of customers and communities first, not the rescue of a failed model at public expense.
- Call on the Government to scrap Ofwat and replace it with a new regulator – one that is properly funded and properly resourced to hold water companies accountable for the myriad of failings which have been allowed to spread within the sector;
- Welcome the recommendations made by Sir Jon Cunliffe to radically overhaul the sector, recognising it as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to deliver a system that works for people and the environment;

- Commend the decisive action the Government has already taken to transform our water system, including legislating to ban bonuses, introducing prison sentences for polluting water bosses, launching a record number of criminal investigations, securing £104 billion of private sector investment to repair and modernise the UK's water infrastructure, and launching the Independent Water Commission.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date