MINUTES OF THE Full Council HELD ON Monday, 12th October, 2026,7pm – 8.47pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Ash Ahmed, Imad Ahmed, Ata Berk Aksit, Ibrahim Ali, Kaushia Amin, Bethany Anderson, Emily Arkell, Dawn Barnes, Johann Beckford, Eva Bell, Beverley Berrick, John Bevan, Mark Blake, Luisa Brands, Karolina Braun, Dana Carlin, Luke Cawley-Harrison, Seema Chandwani, Simon Clark, Nick da Costa, Lucia das Neves, AJ Egemonye, Fin Fitzgerald, Melanie Gingell, Anne Gray, Mark Grosskopf, Makbule Gunes, Mike Hodges, Andrea Hodgson, Tammy Hymas, Gio Iozzi, Sue Jameson, Marc Jenner, Dan Johnson, Dixie-Ann Joseph, Tehseen Khan, Marie Kristensen, Jo Kuper, Rosie Latchford, Anna Lawton, Fiona Orford-Williams, Ajda Ovat, Daniela Parry, Ruairidh Paton, Tony Powell, Elara Shurety, Nelly Tackie, Edward Thacker, Georgia Twigg, Hannah Ward, Elin Weston and Erin Wolson

32. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Member noted the filming at meetings notice.

33. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following apologies for absence were received:
Councillor Small
Councillor Bentham- Emery
Councillor Williams
Councillor Reid

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest put forward.

35. CSO 3.1 VI - WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed the young people to the meeting and outlined that the meeting had been organised in a way for young people to express themselves and help make a difference to their community.

The Mayor highlighted that the under 19s of Haringey made up approximately 21 % of the total population and decisions that the Council made would have a lasting impact on these young people. The Mayor emphasised that young people were an integral part of shaping the future of local democracy.

The Mayor further welcomed the Haringey Youth Games competitors and winners to the meeting, highlighting that the Haringey borough youth team had competed with 32 other London boroughs and won the Youth Cup, for the 2nd consecutive year.

There was a round of applause for the Haringey Youth Athletics Team.

The Mayor called on Councillor Paton, Co – Deputy Leader of the Green Group and acting in the constitutional capacity as Chief Whip who in accordance with Council Standing Order 25.1, moved the suspension of Council Standing Orders: 13.1, 15.1 to allow speeches/ presentations from the Haringey Young people on the key concerns of young people living in the borough.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Weston and AGREED by the members of the Council.

36. CSO 3.1 VI - INTRODUCTION FROM THE LEADER

The Mayor called on the Leader of the Council to welcome the Youth Council and young people to the meeting and open the speeches and presentations from them. The Mayor was pleased to have assistance from young people Mariah and Alex for the chairing of this item.

The Leader remarked that the meeting was a celebration of young people in the borough and would be a reflection of the challenges that they faced. It was noted that young people were navigating uncertainty around employment, mental health, and special educational needs at a frequently changing time. Despite these difficulties, Haringey was fortunate to have many exceptional young people, including those involved in Haringey Youth Council. While some challenges were beyond the Council's control, the Council remained committed to listening, supporting young people, and working with young people to create meaningful change and opportunities for the future.

The first topic area was on young people's safety, crime, discrimination and antisocial behaviour

Zakariya, Deputy Leader of the Haringey Youth Council, raised concerns about the continuing impact of knife crime on young people, noting that although offences had decreased, levels remained significant. Zakariya called for increased knife surrender facilities and expressed concern that issues raised by young people had not resulted in visible action. He urged the Council to strengthen engagement with the Youth Council, provide regular updates on matters raised by young people, and involve them in developing practical solutions to tackle knife crime.

Gideon addressed the meeting on youth crime, drawing on his experience as a young person and a voluntary police cadet. He shared a personal account of his sibling being robbed and highlighted concerns about the impact of crime on young people. Gideon identified factors contributing to youth offending, including poor housing conditions, overcrowding, poverty, school exclusion, neglect and a lack of positive role models. Gideon emphasised the importance of collaboration between youth services, schools, parents, the police and community groups, and advocated for early intervention and expanded support services to address the root causes of crime and prevent young people from becoming involved in criminal activity.

Hassy raised concerns about youth vaping, underage drinking and antisocial behaviour. Hassy called for stronger enforcement against retailers selling age-restricted products to young people and highlighted the need for better education, youth provision and support services. Hassy urged the Council and partner organisations to work together to address the root causes of these issues and improve outcomes for young people.

Ernest addressed the Council on student safety in secondary schools, highlighting concerns that pupils' feelings of safety decline as they progress through school. He noted the impact of factors such as social media and social isolation on young people's wellbeing and confidence. Ernest emphasised that schools should be safe and supportive environments where all pupils feel valued and able to learn and stressed the importance of ensuring that every child feels safe, supported and empowered to succeed.

The Mayor called on the Cabinet Member for Communities to respond to these speeches.

In response, the Cabinet Member thanked the Youth Council representatives for their thoughtful contributions and acknowledged the wide range of concerns and suggestions raised throughout the discussion. It was recognised that the issues highlighted, including community safety, youth provision, access to opportunities and support for young people, reflected the experiences and priorities of many young residents across the borough. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the Council valued the views of young people and remained committed to ensuring that their voices were heard and reflected in decision-making processes.

The Cabinet Member outlined ongoing work to address these concerns, including strengthening enforcement activity against the illegal sale of vapes and alcohol to under-18s, investing in youth services, sports facilities, mentoring programmes and other initiatives designed to provide positive opportunities for young people. It was also noted that the Council continued to work with partners to address antisocial behaviour and improve community safety.

The next topic area was support for young people leaving care and SEND support

Anthony, speaking on behalf of the Elevated Youth Panel, highlighted the challenges faced by neurodiverse young people aged 18 to 25 in accessing support services. Anthony described difficulties caused by fragmented systems, repeated assessments,

staff turnover and poor communication between agencies, which often left young people responsible for co-ordinating their own support. Anthony emphasised that delays in accessing services could have long-term impacts on education, employment, housing and wellbeing. Antony called for a more joined-up approach, improved follow-through on referrals and holistic support for neurodiverse young people and asked how the Council could improve outcomes.

Kuba spoke about the challenges of accessing appropriate school placements and support. He highlighted the difficulties many young people with SEND face in finding suitable educational provision, delays in securing placements and the limited choices available to families. Kuba emphasised the importance of increasing specialist provision and school places to ensure young people with SEND can access the support they need to succeed in education, achieve their aspirations and participate fully in future opportunities. Kuba urged decisionmakers to invest in more inclusive educational support for young people in the borough

The Mayor called on the Cabinet Member for Children's and Schools to respond.

In response, the Cabinet Member thanked Anthony and Kuba for their contributions and acknowledged the significant challenges faced by neurodiverse young people and those with special educational needs. Drawing on both personal and professional experience, the Cabinet Member recognised the frustration caused by delays in accessing support and the need for services to be more responsive to the realities of young people's lives.

The Cabinet Member noted that forthcoming SEND reforms would place greater emphasis on supporting children and young people within mainstream education settings and stressed the importance of working with young people to ensure that these changes met their needs. It was acknowledged that services were often structured around policy requirements rather than the complex and interconnected needs of individuals, and that more work was required to deliver effective, person-centred support.

The Cabinet Member agreed that neurodiverse young people required more than expressions of support and that meaningful change would be measured by improved outcomes and access to services. While recognising that progress would take time, assurance was given that the issues raised would help inform the case for change and future improvements to SEND and neurodiversity support across the borough.

The next topic was on housing for asylum seekers

Zakiiya highlighted the challenges faced by asylum seekers and their families arriving through humanitarian pathways in the borough. It was noted that, despite Haringey providing support to those seeking safety, a shortage of affordable housing remained a significant issue, with many families living in temporary, overcrowded, or unsuitable accommodation. Concerns were raised about the impact of housing instability on children, including disruption to education, wellbeing, and community connections. Zakiiya called for increased provision of affordable long-term housing, greater efforts to minimise unnecessary relocations away from schools and support networks, and continued community support for organisations assisting refugees and asylum

seekers. The Cabinet was urged to work towards ensuring all children had access to a safe and stable home environment.

The Cabinet Member for Housing thanked Zakiiya for raising the issue and acknowledged the challenges faced by asylum seekers, particularly in the context of increasing anti-migrant sentiment and the impact this had on individuals and communities. It was noted that the borough continued to face significant housing pressures, with approximately 13,000 households on the housing waiting list and around 2,700 families living in temporary accommodation.

In response, the Cabinet Member agreed that increasing the supply of affordable housing was essential and highlighted the Council's commitment to delivering new council homes to provide secure and stable housing for residents. The importance of ensuring that families, including asylum seekers, were able to remain within the borough wherever possible was also emphasised, recognising the benefits of maintaining access to schools, community networks, and local support services.

The Cabinet Member further noted that some decisions relating to asylum support were determined by central government. However, the Council remained committed to advocating for the rights of asylum seekers and refugees and to supporting efforts to ensure that those arriving in the borough had access to safe, secure, and sustainable housing.

The next topic was on wheelchair access

Rory raised concerns about the accessibility challenges faced by wheelchair users in the borough, drawing on the experiences of a family member. It was noted that many homes in Haringey were inaccessible without significant adaptations, and concerns were expressed regarding the enforcement of accessibility standards in new housing developments. Rory also highlighted the limited availability of step-free access at local train stations, which increased travel times, reduced independence, and created additional costs for wheelchair users. Further concerns were raised about uneven and poorly maintained pavements, as well as obstructions caused by abandoned rental e-bikes, which created barriers to safe movement. The Council was urged to improve accessibility across the borough by strengthening enforcement of housing accessibility requirements, maintaining and upgrading pavements, and lobbying for improved step-free access at local transport hubs to support independent living for wheelchair users.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Transport responded and thanked Rory for highlighting the challenges faced by wheelchair users and welcomed the personal perspective shared. It was acknowledged that improving accessibility remained an important priority to ensure disabled residents could live independently and access services and transport more easily.

In response to concerns about housing, it was noted that accessibility was a core principle within the Council's housing programme and that specialist teams worked with families to design homes that met complex disability and health needs. The Cabinet Member highlighted that 20% of new homes delivered through the Council's programme would be wheelchair accessible or adaptable, exceeding the London

requirement, while encouraging any concerns regarding developers failing to meet accessibility standards to be reported for investigation.

Regarding transport accessibility, the Cabinet Member recognised the difficulties created by a lack of step-free access and noted that, while much of the transport infrastructure was outside the Council's direct control, but noted that improvements were planned at several local stations. It was further noted that accessibility across London's transport network continued to improve, although further progress was needed. Rory was also invited to share ideas with the Council's Transport and Highways team to help inform future accessibility improvements across the borough.

The next topic was on young people helping shape their communities

Iris spoke about the importance of creating opportunities for young people and ensuring they had a greater voice in shaping their local area. It was noted that while youth clubs provided valuable opportunities for many young people, a wider range of social spaces, including parks and sports facilities, should also be promoted. Iris highlighted the benefits of involving young people in decisions about local infrastructure and public spaces, noting that only a small proportion of young people currently had opportunities to participate through the Youth Council. Suggestions included delivering workshops and engagement programmes in schools to gather young people's views, improving park infrastructure through additional seating, sports facilities and green spaces, and increasing awareness of participation opportunities available to young people.

It was highlighted that these measures would strengthen community connections, encourage greater use of local spaces, and support the wellbeing of young people and residents across the borough.

The Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy responded, and welcomed the emphasis placed on the importance of involving young people in shaping local communities and public spaces. It was acknowledged that young people were an important part of the borough and that their views should be considered when decisions were made about the places where they lived, learned and spent their free time.

The Cabinet Member recognised the importance of ensuring that opportunities to participate were accessible to a wider range of young people and agreed that greater engagement beyond formal structures was needed. Support was expressed for the practical suggestions put forward, including increased engagement through schools, improvements to park facilities and public spaces, and greater promotion of opportunities for young people to become involved in local decision-making.

The Cabinet Member also welcomed the positive reflections on the borough and encouraged young people to continue sharing their views, challenging decisionmakers and contributing to the future development of Haringey. An invitation was extended for members of the Youth Council to engage further with placemaking projects and contribute their views on future developments, parks and community spaces across the borough.

The next topic is on Mental Health and bullying

Trina addressed the meeting about the pressures faced by pupils in schools and highlighted the challenges of balancing homework, revision, part-time employment, and personal wellbeing. It was explained that large amounts of homework, often with multiple deadlines in the same week, could create significant stress and limit time for exam preparation and relaxation. The student noted that while some teachers were understanding, others were less aware of the pressures faced by young people. Members were urged to recognise that students can experience high levels of stress and that a balance was needed between academic expectations and personal wellbeing. It was emphasised that, although homework and academic challenge were important, students should also have sufficient time to rest, and concerns about stress should not be dismissed as laziness or exaggeration. Trina concluded by stating that school can be both rewarding and stressful, and that students should be supported to work hard while maintaining their wellbeing and achieving their goals.

Eylyul addressed the meeting regarding the mental health and wellbeing of young people in schools. It was recognised that schools provided a safe and supportive environment for many pupils; however, concerns were raised about declining levels of student mental health and the varied factors contributing to this. Eylyul highlighted that behavioural issues often stemmed from underlying personal circumstances and that pupils placed in alternative provision could sometimes feel isolated or unwanted. While acknowledging the importance of behaviour management and academic achievement, it was suggested that greater focus should be placed on understanding and supporting individual needs. The reduction in permanent exclusions across the borough was welcomed as a significant achievement, but it was noted that further progress was needed to promote empathy, emotional wellbeing and a sense of belonging among young people. Eylyul suggested that participation in cultural, community and youth activities, alongside access to counselling and therapeutic support, could help students feel valued and understood. It was concluded that schools should continue to support both the academic and emotional development of young people to ensure they are able to thrive and succeed.

Yaa addressed the meeting regarding the increasing prevalence of mental health challenges among young people. Concerns were raised that mental health issues were often misunderstood or dismissed, resulting in delayed support and intervention. Yaa highlighted the long-term impacts of poor mental health, including difficulties with relationships, communication and self-esteem, and noted that academic pressures could contribute to stress, burnout and social isolation. Concerns were also expressed regarding lengthy waiting times for mental health services and barriers to accessing support. It was suggested that greater focus be placed on early intervention, accessible and confidential support services, and improved mental health education and awareness in schools. Yaa concluded that young people should receive understanding, support and care when experiencing mental health difficulties.

Neaveh spoke about the impact of bullying on children and young people's mental health. It was highlighted that bullying can lead to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and school disengagement, with many young people suffering in silence. Neaveh noted the prevalence of both in-person and online bullying and emphasised the lasting effects of hurtful words and exclusion. Neaveh called for action to create safe,

inclusive school environments where differences were respected, kindness is promoted, and seeking help is viewed as a strength. The presentation concluded with a request for continued support for young people affected by bullying.

Danielle spoke about the importance of recognising and supporting young people's mental health. It was highlighted that pressures relating to education, family circumstances, friendships, neurodivergence and underlying mental health conditions can significantly affect wellbeing. Members heard concerns about access to mental health services and the need for earlier intervention, greater support for families, and improved training for teachers and social workers to identify mental health difficulties, neurodivergence, abuse and trauma. Danielle emphasised the importance of creating safe and supportive environments where young people feel heard, understood and able to seek help before difficulties reach crisis point.

Nellie spoke about the importance of providing young people with more opportunities to explore different career paths. She noted that many young people were unsure about what they wanted to do in the future and suggested that this should be seen as an opportunity to try a range of experiences. It was proposed that Haringey Council could support this through career days, workplace visits, taster sessions and partnerships between schools and local businesses, enabling young people to meet professionals and gain first-hand experience of different careers. Nellie asked what Haringey could do to ensure that all young people had greater opportunities to explore their future aspirations

The Mayor called on the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care to respond.

The Cabinet Member thanked the young people for their thoughtful and challenging contributions, noting that they had demonstrated the importance of placing young people's voices at the centre of decision-making. It was highlighted that the issues raised, including mental health, academic pressure and difficulties accessing support, were significant concerns affecting young people's wellbeing, education, relationships and future aspirations.

The Cabinet Member emphasised the Council's commitment to co-production, ensuring that young people had a meaningful role in the design, delivery and evaluation of services. Reference was made to wider Council initiatives, including Best Start in Life, the Thriving Learners Strategy and the SEND Reform Plan, which supported early intervention and inclusion. It was acknowledged that mental health services, particularly CAMHS, faced significant pressures and that greater investment in early intervention is required. Three commitments were made: to continue involving young people in shaping services, to advocate for improved and earlier mental health support, and to work with schools and partners to create inclusive and supportive environments. The Youth Council was thanked for their contribution and challenge, with recognition that young people were helping to shape Haringey's present as well as its future.

The next topic was on finance education for young people

Max expressed support for the previous speakers and reflected on commitments made during their election campaign, including improving access to relevant education and tackling knife crime. Max focused remarks on the importance of financial literacy, highlighting that while students were taught some academic subjects, many left school without a practical understanding of topics such as credit scores, pensions and debt. Concern was raised that financial education, within the curriculum, had not been sufficiently effective, with many students unable to recall receiving meaningful learning on the subject. Max called for collaboration between students and the Council to identify needs and develop improved financial literacy education.

The Cabinet Member thanked Max for raising the important issue of financial literacy and for proposing practical solutions. It was noted that, despite the importance of financial education, many young people leave school without the knowledge and skills needed to manage personal finances effectively. Drawing on personal experience, the Cabinet Member reflected that schools were not consistently equipping young people with essential life skills relating to money management. It was highlighted that financial habits were often passed down through families, meaning that young people whose parents lacked confidence in managing finances could be placed at a disadvantage.

Financial education was therefore described not only as a practical necessity but also as an issue of social justice, helping to ensure all young people had an equal opportunity to succeed. Concern was expressed that a lack of financial knowledge could leave individuals vulnerable to debt, unfair practices and financial exploitation. The Cabinet Member welcomed the opportunity to work collaboratively on the proposal and suggested further discussions with the Head of Schools and Learning to explore local opportunities to improve financial literacy across the borough

Careers and youth employment

Ranielle spoke about the challenges many young people face when deciding their next steps after leaving school. While acknowledging that schools provide careers advice and information, it was noted that having access to information did not always help young people identify the pathway that is right for them. Ranielle reflected on her own experience of uncertainty before finding an interest in early years education and emphasised that not everyone knows what they want to do at an early stage. Suggestions included introducing subject-specific taster days and keeping youth hubs open on GCSE results day to provide guidance and support for young people exploring future opportunities.

Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy thanked the young resident for sharing their personal experiences and acknowledged that many young people face uncertainty when making decisions about their future. It was recognised that, while information about colleges, courses and careers was available, access to information alone did not always provide the confidence needed to make significant life decisions. The Cabinet Member highlighted the importance of opportunities that allowed young people to explore options, gain experience, ask questions and build confidence over time.

Support was expressed for the proposal to introduce more subject-specific taster days and practical experiences that would enable young people to engage directly with employers, colleges, training providers and professionals.

The proposal to provide support through youth hubs on GCSE results day was also welcomed, recognising that results day can be both exciting and challenging for different young people. The Cabinet Member emphasised the need to involve young people in shaping services and employment opportunities, noting that support should be developed with young people rather than for them. A commitment was made to work collaboratively to strengthen guidance, career exploration and sustainable opportunities for young people across the borough.

Haringey Youth Council Manifesto

The Youth Council presented their 2026 Manifesto, setting out its vision for a borough where all young people were treated fairly, respected and provided with equal opportunities regardless of their background or where they lived. Key priorities included improving relationships between young people and the police, tackling discrimination, and ensuring education better prepares young people for adult life through financial literacy, career development and enterprise skills. The manifesto also called for increased work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities, as well as more sports facilities, youth activities and safe spaces. The Youth Council emphasised the importance of involving young people in decision-making and urged the Council to work in partnership with them to shape the borough's future.

ElShaddai, Youth Council Leader, delivered a closing speech highlighting the impact of discrimination and negative stereotypes on young black boys. Drawing on personal experiences, he described how prejudice can affect confidence, opportunities and future aspirations. He emphasised the importance of recognising the potential of all young people and challenged assumptions that can limit perceptions of their abilities. ElShaddai called for increased investment in youth hubs and safe spaces where young people can access support, develop their talents and build positive futures. ElShaddai also advocated for greater accountability within services working with children and for stronger youth involvement in decision-making. The speech concluded by thanking attendees for listening to young people's voices and encouraging collective action to create a borough where all young people feel valued, respected and able to thrive.

The Cabinet Member for Communities thanked the Youth Council Leader for raising the important issue of racism and discrimination. It was acknowledged that, as one of London's most diverse boroughs, Haringey was home to many different communities and languages, but that diversity can also bring challenges, including experiences of racism and inequality. The Cabinet Member highlighted increasing social tensions at both national and international levels and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to tackling discrimination wherever possible. It was emphasised that effective solutions must be developed in partnership with communities and grassroots organisations, rather than imposed from the top down.

The Council's role was described as empowering, supporting and amplifying the voices of residents, particularly young people, and enabling community-led action. The Cabinet Member noted that concerns raised during the meeting, including racism, housing, health, financial pressures and accessibility, were interconnected and required a holistic response that addressed underlying causes. The bravery and commitment shown by the young speakers was recognised, and assurance was given that the Council would not only listen to their concerns but also seek to take meaningful action in response.

The Mayor thanked Mariah and Alex for supporting her with the chairing of this item and praised the fantastic speeches from the Youth Council and young people attending the meeting and led a round of applause for the young people.

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

The Mayor called on Councillor Twigg, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools to move the motion D on Re- affirming support of the Youth Council and support for lowering of the voting age of young people

The Cabinet Member congratulated the Youth Councillors on their speeches, recognising the courage required to speak publicly and thanking them for their valuable contributions. It was noted that the Youth Council played an important role in the democratic process by giving young people a direct voice in issues affecting them. Members acknowledged that listening alone was not enough and stressed the importance of showing how young people's views influence decision-making and services.

A motion was proposed to continue the Haringey Heroes Youth Council. It was stated that democracy should involve not only voting but also ensuring that young people have the knowledge and confidence to participate in civic life.

The Youth Council was highlighted as an important platform for encouraging engagement with the borough, the Council and local democracy, while concerns were raised that more could be done to support young people's understanding of these processes.

The motion also proposed the creation of a cross-party working group to work with schools, engage students in politics and democracy, and support preparations for voting rights for 16 and 17-year-olds. Members emphasised the importance of helping young people make informed decisions and become active participants in their communities. The Council Member encouraged support for the continuation of the Youth Council, the establishment of the working group and initiatives to increase voter registration and democratic engagement among young people.

Councillor Berrick seconded the motion on behalf of the Labour Group and congratulated the Youth Council members for their contributions. It was noted that young people had spoken confidently on a range of important issues affecting the

borough, including support for asylum seekers, knife crime, mental health, community development, wheelchair accessibility and the priorities set out in the Youth Council's manifesto. Members recognised that Council decisions affect residents of all ages, yet many young people do not have sufficient opportunities to influence decisions that impact their lives.

Cllr Berrick welcomed the extension of voting rights to 16 and 17-year-olds, stating that young people have a significant stake in the future of the borough and the country. It was noted that increasing democratic participation among young people could encourage lifelong engagement in the democratic process.
The Council was urged to build on the work of the Youth Council by working with schools, colleges and youth organisations to ensure young people were informed about their democratic rights and had opportunities to register to vote.

It was further emphasised that the voices of young people should be embedded within Council decision-making processes. The motion was supported for its commitment to strengthening engagement with young people in schools and colleges, particularly those who are looked after and those with special educational needs and disabilities. The Member concluded by expressing support for the motion and congratulated the Youth Council on its work and preparation for the meeting.
Councillor Orford-Williams jointly seconded the motion and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Drawing on personal experience as a parent who had raised four children in Haringey, the Member reflected on the value of listening to young people and emphasised that underestimating their perspectives risked overlooking important insights, ideas and solutions. It was noted that young people brought a diverse range of views that could help shape the Council's understanding of local priorities and challenges.

Councillor Orford - Williams highlighted the importance of improving understanding of how local and national politics operated so that engagement could be meaningful and productive. It was stated that this applied not only to 16 and 17-year-olds who may soon gain voting rights, but also to those already eligible to vote. Support was expressed for the proposal to strengthen engagement with schools and youth organisations, with the view that such activity should form part of an ongoing programme rather than a one-off exercise. Councillor Orford- Williams further welcomed the contributions made by young people during the meeting on issues including anti-social behaviour, wheelchair access and mental health. Councillor Orford - Williams praised the strong group of articulate and engaged young people who had demonstrated a willingness to participate in debate and contribute to their communities. It was further noted that 16 and 17-year-olds were users of Council services and should therefore have a voice in how those services are delivered. The Member concluded by thanking the Youth Council for its valuable contributions.

Councillor Twigg thanked Members for seconding the motion and noted the broad support it had received. It was expressed that the Council looked forward to working collaboratively with the Youth Council to ensure that the issues and priorities raised by young people were reflected in future work and decision-making.

It was emphasised the importance of turning the points raised during the meeting into meaningful action and demonstrating to young people how their contributions could

influence change within the borough. It was further noted that continued engagement with the Youth Council would help ensure that young people's voices contributed positively to outcomes for the wider community.

The Motion was unanimously AGREED.

Motion D – Supporting the Representation of the People Bill 2026: Extending the right to vote to 16- and 17-year-olds prior to the next UK parliamentary election and continuing to maintain and preserve the local democratic provision of the Youth Council

Proposer: Cllr Georgia Twigg
Joint Seconders: Cllr Beverley Berrick and Cllr Fiona Orford - Williams

The Council notes that

- The last census the Council undertook indicated that there were over 59,000 under 19s in the Borough- out of an overall population of 261,000. This represents a significant proportion of Haringey's population.
- Young people have more of a stake in our borough's future than any other community group. They will feel the impact of decisions made by politicians, councils and governments more than anyone else – and their opinion and liberty is as vital to democracy as residents 18 and above.
- Evidence cited by supporters of the proposed legislation on lowering the voting age suggests that enabling participation at an earlier age may help establish lifelong voting habits and strengthen democratic engagement over time.
- The Government's objective is to have the legislation in force before the next UK General Election, ensuring that newly enfranchised 16- and 17-year-olds can participate in that election.
- Since 2022, The Council's Youth Services team has undertaken work with schools, youth groups and established youth forums to recruit young people to an initial Youth Panel event. In 2024 the Youth Panel and the Elevated Youth SEND Forum was created with close ties developed between the two forums In October 2025, the Children's Service successfully facilitated a youth council election process, leading to the formal establishment of a Youth Council. These positions were:
- The Youth Leader : St Thomas More School,
- Deputy Youth Leader: Latymer School,
- Secretary (Admin & Governance) Park View School,
- Secretary (Comms & Engagement) Fortismere School ,
- Campaigns & Community Lead, Greig City Academy

- Young residents who represent their community must continue to be heard by the Council especially when it comes to decisions that directly affect them now and in the future.

- Only through genuine and meaningful consultation with young people and the Haringey Youth Council will the Council deliver policies catered to the needs and experience of young people and support them in a way they find productive.
- Closer ties must be maintained between Elected Representatives and The Youth Council.

This Council resolves to:

1. Welcome the Government's commitment to extend voting rights to 16 and 17-year-olds through the Representation of the People Bill.

2. Support the principle that young people should be encouraged to participate in democratic processes and have opportunities to engage in local and national decision-making.

3. Continue to support democratic education, civic participation and voter engagement activity for young people across the borough.

4. Recognise the valuable contribution of the Haringey Youth Council and other youth forums in representing the views and experiences of young people. With the agreement of school governors and head teachers, this includes a commitment for a cross-party group of elected councillors to work together and themselves organise visits the borough's secondary schools and 6th forms on an annual basis to promote engagement in democracy with year 9s and upwards, ensuring that these visits are at an appropriate time in the school year. The visits would be required to comply with required Member codes and protocols set out in the Council's Constitution and with School procedures and protocols.

5. Request that officers monitor the progress of the legislation and provide advice to Members on the implications for the Council once the legislative framework and implementation arrangements are confirmed by Government.

6. Commit to supporting the Electoral Registration Officer in preparing for and implementing any changes arising from the legislation, including ensuring that appropriate resources are available to discharge any new statutory responsibilities.

7. Support engagement with schools, colleges, youth organisations, the Haringey Youth Council, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders to help ensure that young people are aware of their democratic rights and opportunities to participate.

8. To continue to preserve the Youth Council and ensure it continues to be the voice of young people in the borough.

9. To continue to support and facilitate future youth council elections in the borough.

10. Continue to genuinely listen to young people and the Youth Council.
11. Use the Youth Council as a valuable resource, seeking consultation in and outside of formal and Full Council meetings on issues relevant to young people where appropriate.
12. Engage with the Youth Council, ensuring that senior decision-makers, such as Cabinet Members or senior council officers, meet with the Youth Council and to discuss matters of relevance.

Notes: The Representation of the People Bill is currently at Committee stage in the House of Lords [1].

Given the Bill is still before Parliament, we cannot be certain of the final detail of the legislation, however below is a summary based on the most recent explanatory note published in parliament[2].

Votes at 16: Representation of the People Bill 2026

The Bill would:

- Lower the voting age to 16 for UK Parliamentary elections, local elections in England and Northern Ireland, Police and Crime Commissioner elections and Northern Ireland Assembly elections.
- Allow eligible individuals to register from their 14th birthday.
- Introduce provisions to enable identity verification of young people.
- Introduce safeguards to protect the information of registered persons under the age of 16.
- Prevent individuals under 16 from appearing on the open register and restrict publication of their information.
- Expand declaration of local connection provisions for looked-after children and certain other young people.
- Place a duty on local authorities in Great Britain to raise awareness of registration arrangements and assist certain young people in their care to register to vote.
- Provide for further electoral registration reforms, including registration without application, data-sharing provisions and registration pilots.

[1] Representation of the People Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament

[2] Representation of the People Bill – Explanatory Note – 3 September 2026 - https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/4080/publications

- Require additional funding for local authorities to support implementation, including registration, canvassing, election delivery and public awareness activity.
- Require further regulations and commencement provisions before many elements of the Bill can take effect.

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

None

39. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING BODIES

The Mayor called on Councillor Hodgson, Chair of Standards to move the report on changes to the Constitution and Planning Protocol related to the Planning reforms.

Councillor Hodgson introduced the report, which arose from the Standards Committee meeting held on 14 September 2026, and sought Council approval for the constitutional changes set out in Appendix 1B to implement the national scheme of delegation regulations.

It was reported that the proposed amendments to the Constitution reflected changes introduced through the national scheme of delegation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Standards Committee had received assurances that major and sensitive planning applications could still receive Member oversight, whilst Schedule 1 applications would be determined by officers.

It was further noted that there remained flexibility for major developments and Council-owned schemes to be referred to the Planning Sub-Committee, recognising the importance of local accountability.

Members were advised that a strong policy framework would continue to guide decisions on trees, advertisements and other planning matters, including a comprehensive tree policy within the new Local Plan to ensure environmental impacts were properly considered. It was also noted that Councillors would retain the ability to influence decisions by submitting comments and representations for consideration by officers, even where applications were not considered by the Planning Sub-Committee.

The Committee was informed that transparency would be supported through published records and ongoing monitoring. Records of the new gateway test meetings would be made publicly available, with officers exploring more frequent publication of information. Feedback from Members and residents on the process could also be reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee to support transparency and continuous improvement.

It was highlighted that strengthened wording in Section 15 of Appendix 1B clarified that applications considered at gateway meetings would include a record of the

outcome and reasons for decisions, which would be reported to the Planning Sub-Committee.

Finally, it was noted that the proposed constitutional changes had been more clearly separated to ensure Members were clear on the amendments being approved. Appendix 1A contained the existing wording, whilst Appendix 1B set out the revised wording. The recommendations set out on page 3 of the agenda pack were then moved.

Councillor Cawley-Harrison requested that his opposition to the planning reforms introduced by the Labour Government be recorded in the minutes, stating that the reforms removed powers from elected representatives to speak on behalf of their communities. He asked whether the Council would consider opposing the proposals and making its position publicly known. Councillor Cawley-Harrison further requested that, in their capacity as Chair of the Standards Committee, all legally available measures be explored to introduce a clear and definitive policy that would enable Councillors to retain a form of call-in process that was more transparent than the gateway decision-making process set out in the proposals.

The Mayor asked the Monitoring officer to respond.

The Monitoring Officer explained that, should the Council fail to implement the legislation by the required date, it would be in breach of a statutory duty under the regulations and any decision not to do so would be unlawful, with potentially serious consequences. It was noted that the Council could be exposed to a claim for judicial review and that, should such a claim be successful, the High Court could issue a mandatory order requiring compliance. Members were further advised that failure to comply with the legislation could result in additional government intervention against the Council in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority and could also place the Council in breach of its duties under the Best Value framework. It was stated that this information was provided to assist Members in their consideration of the matter.

Following a vote on the recommendations of 44 in favour and 6 opposed, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the proposed changes to the Constitution set out in the report, labelled as Appendix 1B, to implement the national delegations in the Regulations.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair ……..

Date ……