



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING  
Virtual Meeting  
8 July 2020 (7.30 - 10.53 pm)**

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Michael Deon Burton) in the Chair

Councillors Councillors Robert Benham, Ray Best, Carole Beth, Joshua Chapman, John Crowder, Philippa Crowder, Keith Darvill, Osman Dervish, Nic Dodin, David Durant, Tony Durdin, Brian Eagling, Gillian Ford, Jason Frost, Martin Goode, Linda Hawthorn, Judith Holt, Paul McGeary, Paul Middleton, Sally Miller, Robby Misir, Ray Morgon, Barry Mugglestone, John Mylod, Stephanie Nunn, Denis O'Flynn, Gerry O'Sullivan, Ron Ower, Dilip Patel, Nisha Patel, Bob Perry, Viddy Persaud, Roger Ramsey, Timothy Ryan, Jan Sargent, Carol Smith, Christine Smith, Natasha Summers, Matt Sutton, Maggie Themistocli, Jeffrey Tucker, John Tyler, Linda Van den Hende, Christine Vickery, Melvin Wallace, Ciaran White, Damian White, Michael White, Reg Whitney, Christopher Wilkins, Graham Williamson and Darren Wise

The Mayor advised Members and the public of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

The Mayor's Official Chaplain - Father John Tuohy, Parish Priest of St Joseph's Catholic Church, Upminster opened the meeting with prayers.

The meeting closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

**14 PROTOCOL ON THE OPERATION OF FULL COUNCIL DURING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS (agenda item 1a)**

The protocol on the operation of full Council during the Covid-19 restrictions was noted by Council, without division.

**15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (agenda item 2)**

Apologies were received from Councillor Tele Lawal.

**16 MINUTES (agenda item 3)**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 10 June 2020 were before the Council for approval.

Procedural motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group

That Council agrees that the Conservative and North Havering Residents' Associations Groups votes are recorded accurately but many of the non-Conservative and North Havering Residents' Associations Groups votes are in dispute.

The Procedural Motion was **NOT CARRIED** by 31 votes to 19 with three abstentions (see division 1).

**RESOLVED:**

**That subject to it being noted that votes of Members of the Independent Residents' Group and Upminster and Cranham Residents' Associations Group were not recorded correctly, the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.**

**17 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (agenda item 4)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**18 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (agenda item 5)**

Tributes were paid to former Councillors Wilf Mills, Fred Osborne and Patricia Rumble, all of whom had passed away recently.

The text of the announcements by the Leader of the Council are attached as appendix 1 to these minutes.

**19 PETITIONS (agenda item 6)**

A petition was presented by Councillor Miller concerning proposed development in Cavendish Avenue.

Council also agreed to the submission of an additional petition by the Mayor concerning a request to restrict use by lorries of the East Hall Lane junction with Wennington Road.

20 **ADOPTION OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY 2020-2023  
(agenda item 7)**

A key Executive Decision recommended the adoption of a new Statement of Gambling Policy for the period 1/09/20 to 31/08/23. The proposed new statement, results of the public consultation undertaken and Equality and Health Impact Assessment for the Policy were also shown in the agenda papers.

The Executive Decision was **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

**That the updated Statement of Gambling Policy 2020-2023 as attached at Appendix 1 of the Key Executive Decision as shown in the agenda papers for the period commencing 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2023 be adopted.**

21 **ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON THE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL  
(agenda item 8)**

A report of the Chief Executive sought to address the allocation of seats on the Committees of the Council following Councillor Sargent ceasing to be a member of the Independent Residents' Group and becoming an independent Member.

**Deemed motion on behalf of the Administration**

That the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect.

**Amendment on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group**

That Council agrees the following changes to the seat allocation:

- A reduction in total seat allocation from 136 to 135. (within this term the total number has been lower - 134 in Jan 2019).
- A reduction in conservative seat allocation from 67 to 66.
- One less conservative seat to allocate means no extra (very disproportionate) conservative seat on Crime and Disorder committee.
- A reduction in the size of the Individuals committee from 7 to 6.
- Reassign the IRG seat on Individuals to Crime and Disorder committee.

Following debate the amendment by the Independent Residents' Group was **NOT CARRIED** by 30 votes to 23 with no abstentions (see division 2); the deemed motion by the Administration was **AGREED** as the substantive motion, without division.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect.**

22 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (agenda item 9)**

Fifteen questions were asked although two questions were withdrawn by the submitting group. The text of all questions submitted with answers and, where asked, summaries of supplementary questions and answers is attached at appendix 2 to these minutes.

23 **COVID 19 RECOVERY PLAN (agenda item 10A)****Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group**

This Council welcomes the steps taken by the Administration in managing the COVID-19 crisis. With the Country entering into the recovery phase of the pandemic, Council requests that the administration brings forward a revised corporate plan for the remaining Council term, truncated and submitted to each overview and scrutiny subcommittee, before being brought to a meeting of the Cabinet for approval.

**Amendment on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group**

(Amended wording shown in italics for clarity).

This Council welcomes the steps taken by the Administration in managing the COVID-19 crisis *and calls on the Executive to manage the recovery phase of the pandemic in an equitable way as the economy re-opens from lockdown* and Council requests that the administration brings forward a revised corporate plan for the remaining Council term, truncated and submitted to each overview and scrutiny subcommittee, before being brought to a meeting of the Cabinet for approval.

The amendment on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group was withdrawn by the Independent Residents' Group, with the agreement of Council. The motion on behalf of the Conservative Group was **AGREED** without division.

**RESOLVED:**

**This Council welcomes the steps taken by the Administration in managing the COVID-19 crisis. With the Country entering into the recovery phase of the pandemic, Council requests that the administration brings forward a revised corporate plan for the remaining Council term, truncated and submitted to each overview and scrutiny subcommittee, before being brought to a meeting of the Cabinet for approval.**

24 **CCTV CAMERAS - RAINHAM VILLAGE (agenda item 10B)**

**Motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group**

The new Havering Local Plan seeks to strengthen the protection of our Conservation Areas and the Executive are promoting investments in the Rainham area, including a new swimming pool and leisure centre in Rainham Village.

In view of this our Council calls upon the Executive to install CCTV cameras at the Bridge Road junctions to safeguard the Rainham Village Conservation Area and London Bid area and protect these investments and to deter Wennington Road, Upminster Road South and Rainham Village constantly and increasingly being illegally used as a short cut for HGVs 40 ton muck lorries accessing Ferry Lane industrial area.

**Amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group**

The Council refers the issue of heavy good vehicles using prohibited roads within the South of Havering to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an investigation, outlining issues faced and possible solutions.

The motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group was withdrawn by the Independent Residents' Group, with the agreement of Council.

25 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW (agenda item 10C)**

**Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group and the Upminster and Cranham Residents Associations' Group**

In February 2018, a cross party group of members put forward to the Governance Committee a report on changing the Overview and Scrutiny structure, in order to provide a more efficient and productive system of scrutiny. In light of the budget savings identified in the recent Council Tax setting meeting and the financial impact COVID-19 will have on borough finances, this council calls for a cross party group of members to re-visit this report and where appropriate provide further recommendations to the Governance Committee to recommend to council for implementation.

**Amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group**

Delete wording after 'will have on borough finances' and replace with:

The Council notes that the Governance Committee has already considered a report from a member-led review of the Overview & Scrutiny Structure and

decided that it was unsuitable for adoption due to shortcomings but refers the matter back to the Governance Committee for further consideration.

For clarity, the amended motion would read as follows:

*In February 2018, a cross party group of members put forward to the Governance Committee a report on changing the Overview and Scrutiny structure, in order to provide a more efficient and productive system of scrutiny. In light of the budget savings identified in the recent Council Tax setting meeting and the financial impact COVID-19 will have on borough finances, the Council notes that the Governance Committee has already considered a report from a member-led review of the Overview & Scrutiny Structure and decided that it was unsuitable for adoption due to shortcomings but refers the matter back to the Governance Committee for further consideration.*

The amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group was withdrawn by the Conservative Group, with the agreement of Council. The motion on behalf of the Residents' Group and Upminster and Cranham Residents Associations' Group was **NOT AGREED** by 28 votes to 23 with two abstentions (see division 4).

## 26 **PROPOSED ASYLUM SEEKER ACCOMMODATION (agenda item 10D)**

### **Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group**

This Council welcomes the approach adopted by the Administration in seeking a review by the Home Office of the suitability of Palms Hotel to be used as accommodation for asylum seekers due to its location. It notes that this decision was taken without consultation with the Council, CCG or other agencies, and is concerned for the welfare, both physically and emotionally, of vulnerable people being placed at the Palms Hotel without adequate access to schooling, health facilities, transportation or wider social support and calls upon the government to enter negotiation with the Council immediately.

The motion on behalf of the Conservative Group was withdrawn by the Conservative Group. This withdrawal was agreed by Council by 52 votes to 0 with 1 abstention (see division 3).

## 27 **ACTIVE TRANSPORT FUNDING (agenda item 10E)**

### **Motion on behalf of the Labour Group**

This Council welcomes the Government's recent announcement regarding funding for Active Transport facilities and welcomes the first tranche of funding, which the Department for Transport has indicatively allocated a sum of £100,000 to each individual borough and the balance of £1.7m to Transport for London. To receive any money under this or future tranches, Boroughs' and TfL will need to satisfy the Department that there are swift and meaningful plans in place to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, including on strategic corridors. This Council therefore, calls upon the Executive to apply for the funding available, if they haven't already done so. If the funding has already been applied for, have appropriate plans been prepared to enable improved cycle and walk ways within the Borough and if affirmative, this Council calls upon the Executive to publish them immediately to the public for consultation purposes.

### **Amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group**

Delete wording after 'strategic corridors' and replace with:

The Council notes that the Executive Decision which was taken to apply for funding to Transport for London as part of the Active Transport scheme was published on 19 June and requests that the results of this application are circulated to all Members once known.

For clarity, the amended motion would read as follows:

*This Council welcomes the Government's recent announcement regarding funding for Active Transport facilities and welcomes the first tranche of funding, which the Department for Transport has indicatively allocated a sum of £100,000 to each individual borough and the balance of £1.7m to Transport for London. To receive any money under this or future tranches, Boroughs' and TfL will need to satisfy the Department that there are swift and meaningful plans in place to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, including on strategic corridors. The Council notes that the Executive Decision which was taken to apply for funding to Transport for London as part of the Active Transport scheme was published on 19 June and requests that the results of this application are circulated to all Members once known.*

The amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group was **AGREED** by 30 votes to 19 with 4 abstentions (see division 5).

**RESOLVED:**

**This Council welcomes the Government's recent announcement regarding funding for Active Transport facilities and welcomes the first tranche of funding, which the Department for Transport has indicatively allocated a sum of £100,000 to each individual borough and the balance of £1.7m to Transport for London. To receive any money under this or future tranches, Boroughs' and TfL will need to satisfy the Department that there are swift and meaningful plans in place to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, including on strategic corridors. The Council notes that the Executive Decision which was taken to apply for funding to Transport for London as part of the Active Transport scheme was published on 19 June and requests that the results of this application are circulated to all Members once known.**

**28 VOTING RECORD**

The record of voting decisions is attached as appendix 3 to these minutes.

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**Mayor**



## Appendix 1

### **Full Council 8 July – Leader’s statement**

Over the past few weeks we have seen lockdown restrictions begin to be eased in our borough and right across the country. It has been encouraging to see our parks, streets and town centres gradually return closer to normality.

Last weekend saw the reopening of pubs, restaurants and a whole host of other businesses. This also included hairdressers – which I’m sure like many people – I was very happy to be able to book in a long-overdue cut and finally shed the ‘lockdown look’!

We know that our local businesses and economy have been badly impacted by coronavirus and the Council is doing everything possible to help them recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As well as distributing the financial support provided by the Government, the Council is also helping local businesses by offering advice and poster toolkits to allow them to re-open in a safe, socially distanced way.

It has been great to see so many residents returning to the high streets to support their local communities by shopping locally and helping Havering businesses back on their feet. The Council will continue to do the same.

Over the last couple of weeks – we have announced some bold measures to help our high streets.

From after Monday 3 August, all Council car parks and “stop and shop” on-street parking bays will be free of charge every Sunday.

The new “stop and shop” initiative provides one hour free parking in more than 1,000 on-street parking bays from Monday to Saturday.

At the same time, there will also be the launch of a new parking app – RingGo – that will give a 20 per cent discount on all parking charges using Covid-safe contactless payment via app, mobile phone or text.

I am also extremely proud of our new Havering Heroes free parking permit. We must not allow the life-saving work of our key workers to go unrecognised and our permit is a thank you for the sacrifices they have made during COVID-19. I hope other councils follow our lead.

Havering Council was one of the few local authorities to suspend parking charges as lockdown began. We are also one of the last to resume parking enforcement and charges.

We have and continue to work hand-in-hand with businesses to help our town centres become Covid-secure and ready to recover. As confidence returns to the high street, so will residents and just as we all came together to fight the pandemic, we must remain united to support local businesses.

One disappointing aspect of the easing of lockdown has been the amount of litter that has been left across our beautiful parks and open spaces.

While our parks and street cleaning staff are working tirelessly to keep Havering clean, the COVID-19 outbreak means some services have fewer people working in them than usual.

This means that bins cannot always be emptied as regularly as we would like so it's even more important that people use the bins provided. I ask residents that if they find a bin is already full please look for another one which is less full or walk your waste home.

I am pleased that as we edge closer to recovery we can also now resume our ambitious regeneration plans to provide more affordable homes for local people. This is even more important to ensure a bright future for our borough as we come out of the pandemic.

Last month – at a virtual planning committee meeting – our plans for a new retirement village on the Solar, Serena, Sunrise estate in Hornchurch were given the green light.

Our impressive proposals mean that our new retirement village will allow our older Havering residents to live fulfilling, independent lives in a state-of-the-art community, and to also access the support they might need in later life.

This development is part of the '12 Estates' regeneration programme, which will see around 3,500 homes delivered with our joint venture partner, Wates Residential, over the next 12 to 15 years. The £1 billion programme will seek to double the amount of council rented accommodation and more than double the number of affordable housing.

Elsewhere in the south of the borough, our joint venture with Notting Hill Genesis, to provide more affordable homes continues apace.

Last week saw the close of the latest public consultation – where residents had their say on plans for the first three sites – out of nine - to be developed along the A1306 corridor in Rainham.

It will provide up to 160 homes for local residents and will also include the relocation of the much-loved Silver Hall Social Club.

On Monday – I was delighted to visit our new development on Crow Lane in Romford, called 'Victory Place'. The site includes 82 brand new properties which the Council and Mercury Land Holdings have purchased to help tackle the housing shortage for family-sized homes.

Following on from the 42 homes at the Briar Road development in Harold Hill, which were made available last year, these brand new homes at Victory Place range from 1-bedroom apartments to a large number of 4-bedroom family homes.

I am both excited and proud to mark these milestones. It means we are a step closer to providing more affordable homes to local people. We are shaping our

communities of the future and promising to create a borough where people are proud to call home.

Most of what I have mentioned so far is promising and it provides us with a glimmer of hope that our borough will continue on the path to recovery from the pandemic.

However, this will only happen if we continue to be cautious, sensible and considerate of each other. Coronavirus has not gone away. As we have seen in Leicester – these new freedoms we can all enjoy can easily be reversed. While the number of cases in Havering is nowhere near the level which would call for a local lockdown, what's happening in Leicester should be a stark reminder to us all – we are not out of the woods yet.

We all need to continue with social distancing, and maintain effective respiratory and hand hygiene. Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms must self-isolate and request testing so that their close contacts can be traced before they unknowingly spread the infection further. Last week the Council published our local outbreak plan which provides a clear blue print for how we would respond in the event of an outbreak within our borough.

Our recovery will only continue if everyone keeps to the rules. Unfortunately if you don't behave sensibly, and maintain social distancing, you not only risk a new spike in coronavirus cases in our borough you also put yourself and all those you live with at risk. None of us want to go back to lockdown – so I ask all residents - whatever you do as rules are relaxed, please stay alert and stay safe.

We continue to review and take stock on how the coronavirus crisis has hit the Council's coffers. Last month, the first report on the financial impact of the coronavirus was submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Board. This is the first report of a series to outline where we are and how we will respond to this crisis, each report relating to our COVID-19 response I shall be seeking to submit to the O/S board to help ensure that whatever we agree is the best that it can be.

Over the coming months, we must renew our commitment to our borough's future. We will need to work in a different way – not just Council Officers but also us as members and politicians. Politically, I very much hope that our “new normal” will mean we can come together to help and improve the lives of our residents.

On Sunday – I was honoured to join the millions of people across our country to mark 72 years of our NHS – with a national toast and applause.

Their birthday this year is particularly poignant – with the challenge of coronavirus. Their work over the past few months has saved countless lives and has been integral in keeping our country safe.

On behalf of all members and council staff – we thank you. The NHS is what makes our country so special and it was an honour to be able to celebrate this brilliant institution over the weekend.

Finally, I would like to say thank you again to our council staff, volunteers and agency colleagues who continue to work tirelessly to help us through this crisis.

I continue to be amazed at the length and breadth of the scale of support that has been provided by our council to our communities. Regardless, of their own fears, anxiety and personal experiences with the virus – our staff continue to help keep our frontline services running, support our most vulnerable residents and assist in our ability to come out of this stronger. With their commitment and my council's ambition – I am confident we will forge a new future for Havering together.



FULL COUNCIL, Wednesday 8 July 2020

### MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

#### Cost of Disputes with Former Employees

1) **To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Damian White)**  
**From Councillor Ray Morgon**

During his budget speech to Council, the Leader of the Council stated that he wants to make Havering Council to be an employer of choice, a top one hundred UK organization. In light of his statement, would the Leader comment on a recent article in the Romford Recorder in relation to Havering Council spending well over £1 million in the last four years to resolve disputes with former employees.

#### Answer

The Council only uses settlement agreements in exceptional circumstances – principally when there is an employment dispute between the council and an employee. A settlement agreement may be used to agree the terms of an employee's departure or to resolve a dispute with an employee who continues to work for the council. Settlement agreements must comply with statutory requirements and, as importantly, be an effective use of public money.

Between 2016 and 2019, a number of disputes were resolved via the use of a settlement agreement. In November 2019, the council introduced a protocol which aims to reduce the use of expenditure on settlement agreements and eliminate any perception or expectation that poor performance or misconduct may be rewarded with a financial agreement.

A supplementary question asked if the Council hoped to be considered a top 100 employer. The Leader of the Council stated that both the Administration and officers were committed to making the Council an employer of note and that the Council had a clear aspiration to be a top 100 employer. Investment had been made in office accommodation and staff development such as the apprenticeship programme. The Leader added that he would not apologise for seeking to have the best working environment at the Council.

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## **Wearing of PPE on Public Transport**

2) **To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Damian White)**  
**From Councillor David Durant**

The Mayor of London has warned residents not to use public transport unless “absolutely necessary” and made oppressive mask wearing compulsory! Considering Havering residents pay a GLA precept was the Council Leader consulted about this and if so what is his view?

### **Answer**

Havering would not expect to be consulted on these measures as the Mayor is responsible for operating public transport in London.

Wearing of face masks is now compulsory on public transport nationwide.

This requirement is consistent with the best available evidence provided by SAGE to inform the development of national policy. [DELVE: Report on face masks for the general public \(21 April 2020\)](#) states that ‘Face masks offer an important tool for managing community transmission of COVID19 within the general population..... Our analysis suggests that their use could reduce onward transmission by asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic wearers ... if used widely and correctly, face masks, including homemade cloth masks, can reduce viral transmission’.

Rates of COVID related mortality have been particularly high amongst transport workers and I am sure that Havering residents would want to do everything possible to protect staff delivering an essential public service.

What is important is that people remain safe and we beat this dreadful disease. The Government has set out how this will happen based on science, which includes wearing face coverings on public transport. It is important we follow this advice.

I personally want to be in a world which is Covid free. I hope all Members agree.

A supplementary question asked if the Leader agreed that the Mayor of London was biased against shops by insisting that face coverings would have to be worn. The Leader of the Council responded that public health professionals agreed that the wearing of face coverings reduced the transmission of Covid-19.

## **Disposal of Waste from Highways Maintenance**

**3) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Osman Dervish)  
From Councillor Ron Ower**

Could the Cabinet Member advise this Council, as to what happens to removed paving slabs and other waste generated through highways maintenance operations?

**Answer**

We aim to recycle as much as possible. Once any paving slabs are removed, depending on their condition, they can be reused as off-cuts and are stored within the Highways Depot. If items are damaged and cannot be reused by the council they are taken to an approved waste contractor who will, if possible recycle them depending on condition. All other waste generated is taken to an approved waste and recycling centre.

A supplementary question asked if an indication could be provided in writing of how much revenue had been received from the recycling of paving slabs. The Cabinet Member agreed that this would be provided.

## **Review of Environmental Policies**

**4) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Osman Dervish)  
From Councillor Keith Darvill**

What progress has been made by the Executive to review its policies relating to:-

- a) the impact of Climate Change;
- b) the improvement in Air Quality; and,
- c) the need to improve significantly the recycling of waste products.

In accordance with the motion resolved at Full Council on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019?

**Answer**

Two officers have been appointed to take the air quality and climate change agenda forward. Actions to date include:

- The appointment of a pro bono consultant to research best practice and identify all Council activity which addresses the causes of climate change.
- Widening the remit of the Air Quality Action Plan Working Group to ensure that air quality and climate change are paramount across the council when creating policies, implementing changes and procurement.

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- The Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is also being reviewed. Some key achievements of the Plan are the planting of extra trees in poor air quality “hot spots” in the borough, the use of alternative fuels for council transport fleet and project work with schools to reduce idling of vehicles focusing on school pick up and drop off times.

The monitoring of large construction sites to ensure the reduction of emissions harmful to air quality is also underway.

A meeting was held with Lead Portfolio Members to consider the emerging issues from the Climate Change Policy Review. Members recognised the cross cutting nature of Havering’s response and asked for particular attention to be paid to measuring improvements and progress. A report to a Theme Board on options was requested.

The East London Waste Authority (ELWA) and their contractor Renewi are responsible for the disposal and recycling of household waste produced by Havering.

Havering currently collects plastic bottles, paper, card, cardboard, tins and cans within orange sacks, whilst batteries and small electrical can be collected separately but at the same time as the orange sack. We have the highest recycling rates within the Waste Authority area.

ELWA has recently indicated that it will be possible to trial a collection of glass at the kerbside. This is currently in the planning stages.

In the meantime, we encourage residents to try to reduce waste altogether.

A supplementary question asked why it had taken so long for an update to be received and when these plans would be considered by Overview and Scrutiny or Full Council. The Cabinet Member responded that procurement of services such as these took time but he was happy for this area to be looked at by Overview and Scrutiny.

- 5) This Question was withdrawn by the North Havering Residents’ Group**

**Service Charges to Council Tenants**

- 6) To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Joshua Chapman)  
From Councillor Stephanie Nunn**

Council tenants, together with leaseholders in Council blocks are charged various service charges whether the service is provided or not. Does the Cabinet Member agree this is unethical and unfair?



**Answer**

Council tenants and leaseholders will only be charged for services they receive. If they do not receive a service, they won't be charged for it. This is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the accounts are audited to ensure that we comply with the law.

A supplementary question why tenants had to pay for services such as CCTV if they did not use them. The Cabinet Member pointed out that tenants may benefit from e.g. CCTV in a neighbouring area that covered their property but he was also willing to look at a more nuanced approach. A review of CCTV on housing estates was also being undertaken. The Cabinet Member emphasised that tenants did not have to pay for a service they did not receive.

**River Maintenance near Rainham Village Conservation Area**

**7) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Osman Dervish)  
From Councillor Jeffrey Tucker**

In view of new developments by Dovers Corner and in Rainham Village, please provide an update on any new infrastructure and planned maintenance of river and culverts to protect Rainham Village and Conservation Area from flooding?

**Answer**

All major developments must submit a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy to help prevent flooding within their site while incorporating sustainable drainage techniques.

A Planning condition upon the Dovers Corner development is the naturalisation of Pooles Sewer and returning it to a natural river. This will decrease the flood risk for the local area as Pooles Sewer is a direct "off take" from the River Ingrebourne where currently Pooles Sewer is under capacity. Naturalisation will increase the hydraulic capacity and water flow rate, reducing the risk of flooding.

The Environment Agency maintain the River Ingrebourne and will complete routine maintenance and any heavy maintenance works as necessary. We will also routinely inspect any river that runs through council owned land and complete routine maintenance. Any heavy maintenance works, such as dredging, will be considered should this be required. £1m will also be invested to dredge the lake in Harrow Lodge Park.

There is a designated flood storage area upstream of Beam Park managed and maintained by the Environment Agency and further upstream in Romford adjacent to the River Rom the "Land of the Fanns" are delivering a natural flood management project that will benefit the Rainham area regarding flood mitigation.

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Work will also be undertaken with the Council's Joint Venture partners to ensure new developments are fold risk assessed.

A supplementary question asked how drains in Rainham Village that were old and in need of repair would be maintained correctly. The Cabinet Member responded that there had not been any internal flooding in Rainham Properties since 2010. He was however happy to receive further details on this from Councillor Tucker. It was necessary to understand who was responsible for specific drains which in some cases was Thames Water. The Cabinet Member was also happy to arrange a site visit to Rainham in order to investigate further.

- 8) **This Question was withdrawn by the Upminster and Cranham Residents' Group**

**Delivery of Social Housing**

- 9) **To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Damian White)**  
**From Councillor Paul McGeary**

What progress is being made with the Joint Venture Housing Development Projects and in particular when will the planned social housing properties be available to let to local residents?

**Answer**

The Council is a member of three joint ventures delivering new local homes for local people. These are:

**Havering Wates Regeneration LLP**

The Wates joint venture is set to deliver new homes across 12 former housing estates.

The programme is progressing well, with two sites fully demolished, planning permission secured for the Napier New Plymouth site and planning permission now agreed locally for Solar Serena Sunrise retirement development in Harrow Lodge Park. A hybrid planning application for Waterloo was submitted in June 2020, covering outline planning for the whole site with detailed planning for the first blocks. These first phase sites are expected to start construction in 2020/21 with the first homes expected to be ready for occupation in Summer 2022.

**Bridge Close Regeneration LLP**

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The Bridge Close scheme will deliver new homes on the site in central Romford. A planning submission for the first phase is expected later this year, with construction starting in 2022 and the first new homes ready for occupation in Summer 2025.

**Rainham Beam Park Regeneration LLP**

The Rainham Beam Park scheme will add new homes for the new Rainham Beam Park community in the south of the borough.

Outline planning permission has been secured for 8 of the 9 sites, with the ninth application expected to be considered shortly. Detailed planning applications will be submitted for the first three sites this year, with the remainder following from 2021. Construction will begin on phase one in 2021 with the first homes ready for occupation in Winter 2022.

**Crow Lane**

The Crow Lane development is being delivered by Hollybrook Construction in conjunction with Mercury Land Holdings and the Council. The scheme will deliver 82 new homes, including 38 three and four bedroomed houses the council has purchases and will be let to local families. These will be ready for occupation starting in Autumn 2020.

**A total of 1,650 affordable rented homes will be available for let between 2020 and 2029.**

The affordable rented homes will be available for letting after completion and let to local people that have been Havering residents for at least 6 years, as per the housing allocations policy. Sales of council-developed shared ownership and market sales units will also be targeted to local people first.

Havering's housing regeneration programme is one of the largest, if not the largest, active programme in London.

The affordable homes for rent from the Rainham JV with Notting Hill Genesis will be available for Havering residents via nomination rights as the other JVs where the council remains the owner. However, NHG will remain the owner of those properties. The following details the planned completion of affordable rented homes by year. These will replace homes knocked down as part of the regeneration programme.

2020: 38  
2022: 221  
2023: 231  
2024: 213  
2025: 233  
2026: 247

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2027: 172

2028: 158

2029: 137

The Rent to Buy and Shared Ownership Schemes also indicate the Council's massive commitment to providing affordable housing across the Borough.

A supplementary question asked for details of the rent levels for the new properties. The Leader of the Council responded that reprovided properties would be at old Council rent levels. The rent levels for new properties would be blended depending on the size of the property.

**Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy**

**10) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Osman Dervish)  
From Councillor Martin Goode**

Following the announcement made by the UK Government's Department for Transport regarding their Cycling and Walking Investment strategy. What safeguards will Havering Council, be considering when they start their review to implement any changes required for our current road layout, to encourage walking and cycling and enable continued social distancing as the lockdown restrictions begin to ease and what measures will be taken to assist the general public? In particular, to the many blind and partially sighted pedestrians, that use our walkways. Both guide dog and cane users rely on kerbs to navigate and it is crucial that a detectable kerb is maintained between vehicles – including bikes – and pedestrians.

**Answer**

Any measures brought in will be subject to equality and health impact assessments to ensure that all users of the highway, including those with a disability, will not face additional problems.

When applying for funding for social distancing measure, the council considered town centres, transport hubs such as stations and schools as to where social distancing would be required.

Signage for social distancing has been placed on lamp columns in the borough as a reminder to the public and some barriers have been placed in Romford town centre to manage queues to larger businesses.

There are currently no plans to remove existing kerbing separating the road and pavement. Should any footway widening be required, due care and consideration.

(No supplementary question).

## Disabled Facilities Grant

- 11) **To the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care (Councillor Jason Frost)**  
**From Councillor Ray Morgon**

In a recent Internal Audit of Disabled Facilities Grant, the audit report included comments such as not supported by documented procedures, cases are not consistently processed, Council open to allegations of discrimination and there is no internal control mechanism in place to identify when properties with a charge applied are being sold. Given these comments, would the Cabinet Member agree that Havering Council are far from being the most productive Council in London?

## Answer

The DFG audit Report, was concluded on 15/3/2019, and gave the service a **moderate** level of assurance. Whilst it is acknowledged that that the audit conclusions identified the need to enhance controls and improve risk management, it also identified that there was a basic sound set of controls within all the areas reviewed.

It is also of note that there was no evidence that cases were being processed inconsistently nor that there had been any discrimination, and that compliance with legislation was also noted. As already acknowledged, the Report identified a *risk* of inconsistency because the processes were not supported by fully documented procedures. These are now in place and Audit have the recommendations are met.

Revised processes are now in place to ensure the decisions made by the Council are clear and transparent. There is now in a single policy document produced in 2019 which is provided to all applicants to ensure the decision making process is visible to applicants.

On the specific issue of property charges, whilst Internal Audit recommended the charge be made to the land registry record, the legal advice concluded the council's interests are sufficiently protected through the current practice of using a local land charge, not a charge on the title register. Controls are now in place to monitor the placing and removal of such charges.

(No supplementary question).

## Independent Review into Racism and Racial Discrimination

- 12) **To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Damian White)**  
**From Councillor David Durant**

Does the Leader of the Council agree that holding a costly and potentially racist review into "institutional racism" in Havering and at Havering Council, in

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response to a police killing in America, is inflammatory and misplaced and liable to bring the Council into disrepute?

**Answer**

Let me categorically state that my decision to commission an independent review into race relations within the Council and wider borough, **is not** because I believe the Council is institutionally racist. I refer you back to the statement given at the AGM which confirms why it is a necessary step:

*“The questions that have been raised about racism across the country following the tragic events in America that led to the death of George Floyd requires clear and decisive action. We must always fight for what is right and challenge ourselves to ensure that we do not allow complacency or injustice to enter our Council. Therefore, to guard against this, I am committing to an independent review of Havering Council and race relations in our borough more widely, and in particular, whether this Council has the policies and processes in place to erase bias and discrimination. The result of this report will be taken to our Cabinet.”*

The global Black Lives Matters campaign has re-focused us on the impact of societal inequalities, reinforced by the PHE research into the disproportionate impact of covid-19 on our BAME communities.

This review will ensure the Council takes the right steps to address this.

A supplementary question asked if the Leader agreed that, whilst all black lives mattered, white lives and all lives also mattered. In response, the Council Leader stated that the Council had a legal duty to stamp out discrimination and that, by doing so, this would defuse community tension.

(Note: Due to time constraints, questions 13-15 were not considered at the meeting).

**Educational Standards at Academies**

- 13) **To the Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families (Councillor Robert Benham)**  
**From Councillor Gillian Ford**

Havering has 7 Academies delivering at an ‘Average’ educational standard, 4 ‘Below Average Education’ and 2 ‘well below average’.

I assume the Council has made representation to the Regional Commissioner as a consequence of the low and unsatisfactory standard of education and therefore what action is being taken to improve educational standards at the above Academies?

**Answer**

In circumstances where the Local Authority has had concerns over an Academy, these are quickly raised with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), and addressed at the next Trust review meeting that the RSC holds. Contact with the RSC is a business as usual interaction and discussions were recently held at the end of 2019.

Two years ago, in response to the drop in inspection grades across the Secondary sector, the Local Authority worked closely with the RSC and established an Improvement Board, which led a number of improvement projects, jointly funded by the LA and Academies. Some of this work has contributed to the recent improvement in Inspection grades.

Havering Education Services continues to work closely with all schools in the Borough, despite local authorities having no statutory responsibility for improving the quality of Academies. The Service has developed a tailored Quality Assurance (QA) process for Academies. The process involves offering a focussed review of individual school QA processes and a range of further support, including paired lesson observations, and inspection preparation. This approach is beginning to deliver positive outcomes as two Secondary Academy schools have already secured a 'Good' Ofsted outcome this academic year - . Marshalls Park were inspected in January 2020, and Drapers were inspected in March 2020. Additionally, the Local Authority expects other Secondary Academies to achieve a 'Good' Ofsted outcome when they are next inspected, and are forecasting reaching c80% of Secondary schools being Ofsted graded 'Good' or better at the end of the current academic year, which represents a significant improvement on 50% at this grade two years ago. This improvement will support the strong education performance across the Borough, where we already have 97% of Primary schools, and 100% of Special schools graded 'Good' or better.

The Local Authority has had little contact from the Regional Schools Commissioner's office prior to the pandemic regarding our secondary school performance due to the improvements identified above, but prior to that, we have an annual meeting with the RSC where we share our collective views about the priority schools and discuss the capacity of Academy Trusts to make the necessary improvements. The view of the RSC is that our Academy Trusts do have capacity, and they certainly are not considering re-brokering any of the schools that are not yet 'Good' or better.

**The impact on vulnerable children of the Coronavirus Covid 19 Pandemic lockdown**

**14) To the Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families (Councillor Robert Benham)  
From Councillor Tele Lawal**

In view of the concerns for the well being of children expressed by experts and psychologists what steps are being taken by the Council to work with schools to mitigate the harm caused to pupils by the lockdown and non attendance at schools.

**Answer**

The Council has been pro-active throughout the pandemic, working closely with schools and early years providers to ensure that children continue to be supported. This has included close working between Council officers and schools to identify any risks to specific children, with plans put in place to mitigate these risks.

The Council has also shared a wide range of guidance specifically related to Safeguarding and Child Protection, as well as providing resources to support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children. As well as accessing resources from leading national agencies, such as Anna Freud and Child Bereavement UK, the Education Services team have also worked with local organisations such as the Havering and Brentwood Bereavement Services to develop local support. Regular briefings are being provided to school SEN Coordinators (SENCO's) and Dedicated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's).

Further guidance and resources for schools when dealing with bereavement has also been provided, including a policy template. In addition, the NELFT CAMHS service has provided schools with an overview of the resources available which aims to help school staff navigate the wealth of information available during the coronavirus situation to support their own wellbeing and that of the children and families in their care. The CAMHS service are also increasing their resources so that schools and pupils can be fully supported when pupils return to school in greater numbers, and the Council is working with its Health partners to ensure that the local CAMHS service has targeted resources to support schools when greater numbers of pupils return.

In addition, Early Help and statutory social work services continue to use existing assessment tools to clearly capture and identify emotional well-being needs which may have been influenced by the pandemic lockdown and associated challenges. This work is clearly communicated and discussed with schools through a variety of networks and is regularly reviewed.



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The Local Authority has also received a number of laptops from the Government and so far has identified 450-500 to be allocated in total, of which over 130 have been collected so far, which will help young people connect with their social worker and schools.

**Repair of Potholes**

**15) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Osman Dervish)  
From Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan**

In a recent report from the RAC, it stated that many Councils have a "Patch and Dash" approach to the repair of potholes. What steps has the Cabinet Member taken to ensure that this does not happen in Havering?

**Answer**

During the last financial year over £10 million capital funding has been invested into the local highway network. The RAC report is requesting councils to invest in road repair/replacement which is what Havering is achieving. The "patch and dash" approach to pothole repairs is not an approach that Havering follows under normal circumstances. However, there are certain circumstances when this approach is unavoidable:-

- (1) Where the pothole is in a location requiring major traffic management or road closures. This is because these arrangements can take up to three months to be implemented, delaying when the pothole can be permanently repaired.
- (2) Where surfacing material is not available for a permanent repair to be undertaken.
- (3) Where the location of the pothole is flooded, reducing the longevity of any permanent repair. In these cases the area is made safe until it has dried / can be dried.
- (4) In cases where severe weather conditions and increased pothole volumes require temporary repairs to be undertaken, temporary repair approaches can be used to ensure all potholes are made safe in the fastest possible time scale.

Temporary repairs are only used where there is a need for urgency, a permanent repair is always undertaken at a later date. Engineers have commenced trialling recycled materials during carriageway resurfacing within the Borough and will be monitoring performance.

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DIVISION NUMBER:	1	2	3	4	5
<b>The Mayor [Cllr. Cllr John Mylod]</b>	X	X	✓	X	✓
The Deputy Mayor [Cllr Christine Vickery]	X	X	✓	X	✓
<b>CONSERVATIVE GROUP</b>					
Cllr Robert Benham	X	X	0	0	✓
Cllr Ray Best	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Joshua Chapman	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr John Crowder	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Philippa Crowder	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Michael Deon Burton	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Osman Dervish	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Jason Frost	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Judith Holt	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Sally Miller	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Robby Misir	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Dilip Patel	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Nisha Patel	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Viddy Persaud	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Roger Ramsey	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Timothy Ryan	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Carol Smith	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Christine Smith	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Matt Sutton	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Maggie Themistocli	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Ciaran White	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Damian White	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Michael White	X	X	✓	X	✓
<b>RESIDENTS' GROUP</b>					
Cllr Nic Dodin	0	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Paul Middleton	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Raymond Morgon	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Barry Mugglestone	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Stephanie Nunn	0	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Gerry O'Sullivan	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Reg Whitney	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>UPMINSTER &amp; CRANHAM RESIDENTS' GROUP</b>					
Cllr Gillian Ford	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Linda Hawthorn	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Ron Ower	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr John Tyler	0	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Linda Van den Hende	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Christopher Wilkins	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>INDEPENDENT RESIDENTS' GROUP</b>					
Cllr David Durant	✓	✓	✓	✓	0
Cllr Tony Durdin	✓	✓	✓	✓	0
Cllr Natasha Summers	✓	✓	✓	✓	0
Cllr Jeffrey Tucker	✓	✓	✓	0	0
Cllr Graham Williamson	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>LABOUR GROUP</b>					
Cllr Carole Beth	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Keith Darvill	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Tele Lawal	A	A	A	A	A
Cllr Paul McGeary	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Denis O'Flynn	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>NORTH HAVERING RESIDENTS' GROUP</b>					
Cllr Brian Eagling	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Martin Goode	X	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Darren Wise	X	X	✓	X	✓
<b>INDEPENDENT</b>					
Cllr Bob Perry	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Jan Sargent	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Cllr Melvin Wallace	X	X	✓	X	✓
<b>TOTALS</b>					
✓ = YES	19	23	52	23	30
X = NO	31	30	0	28	19
0 = ABSTAIN/NO VOTE	3	0	1	2	4
ID = INTEREST DISCLOSED/NO VOTE	0	0	0	0	0
A = ABSENT FROM MEETING	1	1	1	1	1
	54	54	54	54	54

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