

COUNCIL – 25th SEPTEMBER 2025

BUSINESS FROM THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING ON 25th SEPTEMBER 2025

Report of the Borough Solicitor

This report relates to the unconsidered motions and the responses to written Council questions from the Council meeting held on 25th September 2025.

1. Background

The Constitution advises that where motions have not been dealt with at the conclusion of the meeting of the Council, they fall without discussion and are passed onto the relevant Cabinet Member or Committee Chair whose response is then to be provided to the next meeting of the Council. Also, the responses to written questions that were provided for last ordinary Council meeting are to be circulated as part of the next meeting's agenda for information. These responses are then noted at that next meeting without debate.

2. Responses to motions

At the meeting of the Council held on 25th September 2025, there was 1 motion that was not considered due to lack of time. As the Constitution requires, this motion was passed to the relevant Cabinet Member or Committee Chair, who is required to report back to the next meeting of the Council. A copy of the motion and the response is attached at Appendix A to this report.

3. Responses to written questions from Councillors

The written questions from Councillors and the responses from Cabinet Members linked to the Council meeting on 25th September 2025 are attached as Appendix B.

4. Recommendation

That the report be noted.

COUNCIL 25th SEPTEMBER 2025

UNCONSIDERED MOTION

Appendix A

- 1. To consider the following motion, notice of which was given by Councillor Tom Simon and which was seconded by Councillor Matthew Kirk**

This Council celebrates:

- 1) The diverse nature of our communities
- 2) Our proud history of welcoming asylum seekers
- 3) The cross-party motion in January 2023 that called for Camden to become a Borough of Sanctuary
- 4) The work done to achieve that award in July 2024
- 5) The huge contribution made to Camden, and to the UK as a whole, by refugees and immigrants.

This Council condemns the Far-Right demonstration that took place in central London on 13th September. The division and hatred espoused at the demonstration, including racism and transphobia, go directly against the values of unity, openness and compassion that we hold dear.

This Council notes:

- 1) That most immigrants are here in the UK legally
- 2) Without people coming from overseas to bolster our workforce, some industries and key public services could collapse.

This Council further notes that on immigration, communication from the Labour Government, including Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, closely follows the pattern of the previous Conservative Government. It focuses on irregular and illegal immigration, neglecting to provide much needed balance in the narrative on this key issue for the country.

This Council believes the nature of this communication by successive governments has contributed to the rise of Reform UK and the Far Right.

This Council calls on the Leader of the Council to:

- 1) Reconfirm the commitment to the ideals and practice of being a Borough of Sanctuary, against a rising tide of hatred and division
- 2) Write to the Prime Minister, urging him to stop the cycle of negative language from the government about people coming here from overseas.

RESPONSE BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Camden's greatest strength is our rich and diverse communities. We are a borough that is open-minded, tolerant and understanding; a place that provides welcome and where we work every day to give everybody an opportunity to thrive.

I know that many of our residents have been deeply shaken by the recent demonstrations we have seen across the country. The far-right instigators of these demonstrations are determined to intimidate and attack some of the most vulnerable members of our communities, seeking to make our friends, neighbours and colleagues feel unwelcome and fearful.

As a Council, we are clear that Camden is no place for hate. We stand firmly in opposition to all forms of racism and discrimination, and we put community cohesion and resilience at the core of our work.

I take great pride in Camden having achieved full **Borough of Sanctuary status** in June 2024. This award reflects our track record and history of welcoming refugee communities, fleeing war, persecution and human rights abuse, into the borough over many years and our recent efforts to help vulnerable Ukrainian and Afghan families to rebuild their lives.

We are now building on these foundations and working with our community partners to create places of sanctuary, welcome and dignity, where vulnerable refugee communities, can thrive, recover, make positive decisions about their own future and become part of our Camden story.

I fully reconfirm the Council's commitment, and my own, to the ideals and practice of being a borough of sanctuary and a borough where there is no place for hate. This is especially important through this time of increasing global instability and the backdrop of divisive and polarising anti-migrant narratives which are being fuelled by extremist elements in the UK.

Since 2021 Camden has been supporting an influx of vulnerable refugees from Afghanistan and from Ukraine, along with asylum seekers from a variety of countries. Contrary to the assertions of the shadow Home Secretary, all of them are here legally.

Our cross-cutting network of support has been able to help refugee households find stability, healing and growth while offering resettlement housing for eligible families in Camden. These households are now connecting with education and work opportunity, integrating within their communities. The highlights of the last few years include:

- Since March 2022 Camden's residents have provided sanctuary to more than 1,000 Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war in their home country, through Camden's participation in the Homes For Ukraine community sponsorship scheme.
- Under the Camden Pledge, Afghan resettlement scheme, Camden has resettled nearly 100 Afghan households comprised of 350 individuals into long-term homes in Camden.
- In the last 12 months we have helped more than 1,000 asylum seekers living temporarily in hotels in the borough to access Council and community resources, be safer and more secure.

- We have launched a Borough of Sanctuary forum with our community partners to increase our impact, while developing a Borough of Sanctuary grants programme to galvanise our VCS response.

As a Borough of Sanctuary, we aim to speak with one voice on the issues that matter most, alongside our strategic partners. There are significant challenges ahead. Our asks of government are echoed across the sector and members can help lobby for change, including the following:

- Enhancing the employment prospects for working age refugees by ensuring that English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is available to all and that professional qualifications granted in countries outside the UK, are accorded an appropriate status within the UK.
- Providing sustainable funding so that local authorities can continue to deliver the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) scheme and ensure that hosting and rehosting are suitably recompensed, given the cost-of-living crisis.
- Providing greater parity for the different cohorts of refugees arriving in the UK under different visa arrangements, entry status and humanitarian schemes, while aligning with the principles of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Health Organization (WHO).
- Building appropriate safeguards into legislation governing the arrival of asylum seekers into the UK, ensuring protected and vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) receive a compassionate and meaningful response and that additional safe routes are opened up for those fleeing persecution, war, and human rights abuse.
- Allowing asylum seekers waiting more than six months for a decision on their asylum claim, to work in the UK, generating economic benefit within our communities and giving asylum seekers more dignity and independence.
- Increasing the move-on period for asylum seekers receiving positive decision from 28 days to 56 days in order that service users receive the support they need to find a place to live and the means of supporting themselves

ENDS

APPENDIX B

RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION 1

**TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND A SUSTAINABLE
CAMDEN**

BY: COUNCILLOR JONATHAN SIMPSON

Will the Cabinet Member provide an update on plans to address road safety on the King's Cross gyratory? Will the Cabinet Member join me in pressing Transport for London for greater pedestrian safety measures on Swinton and Acton Street?

REPLY

The Council remains committed to improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists in and around the King's Cross gyratory. In spring 2025, Transport for London (TfL), working closely with the Council and London Borough of Islington, completed the Northdown Street scheme. This scheme provides a safer north–south cycle route along the edge of the gyratory and enhances connections for pedestrians and cyclists in the local area.

The responsibility for the gyratory itself lies with TfL, as it forms part of their Transport for London Road Network (TLRN). Council officers continue to meet regularly with TfL to press for progress on the remaining elements of their safety improvement programme for the area, the next phase of which includes several key junctions and approaches across the gyratory area. This phase is currently scheduled for public consultation in 2026, with construction expected in 2027/28. Officers continue to meet and liaise with TfL on a regular basis to ensure that this next phase of improvements proceeds as quickly as possible, and to the highest achievable standards for road safety.

In relation to the concerns regarding Swinton Street and Acton Street, both of which are also part of the TLRN, the Council is not currently aware of any planned TfL schemes for these locations. However, TfL officers will attend the Council's Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee in December, where Members will have the opportunity to scrutinise progress on the King's Cross gyratory scheme and other TLRN projects across the borough. The Council will also raise the concerns about Swinton Street and Acton Street directly and seek clarity on whether any proposals are being considered by TfL for these streets.

QUESTION 2

**TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND A SUSTAINABLE
CAMDEN**

BY: COUNCILLOR JUDY DIXEY

This year has seen the hottest summer in London for many years.

Has the Council investigated and recorded the impact on residents of the heat? What plans is the Council putting in place for mitigation and support in terms of heat protocols in future years? Such as identifying and publicising cool spaces, ensuring maintenance of outdoor shaded areas, and establishing appropriate working practices for directly and indirectly employed outdoor workers?

REPLY

2025 will be the hottest summer on record, with four heat waves declared. Nine of the last 10 summers (2016-2025) have brought temperatures above the long-term average. The analysis supporting the Council's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan and draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2030 clearly identifies the risk and the groups most vulnerable to heat. In particular earlier in 2025, the Council engaged with some of these vulnerable groups to hear their experiences of climate hazards, including extreme heat, and the insights were used to help shape the resulting draft Plan.

The Council's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan and draft new Climate Action Plan include activity to help mitigate the impacts of heat risk, with a focus on the most vulnerable and exposed. For example, in July the Council adopted a new Adverse Weather Plan, which provides early warning of extreme heat events to services across the Council and provides guidance on how to help manage the impacts within the community. The guidance includes, for example, protocols for protecting outdoor workers and advice on how to support elderly residents and other groups who may be particularly vulnerable to heat risk to stay cool. We acknowledge the risk of extreme heat in the workplace and workers' rights to a comfortable working environment. See more here: [Too hot, too cold - Too hot, too cold](#)

The Council has a network of "Cool spaces" with information about how to access facilities communicated to the public whenever heat waves are forecast. Further information about the support is available at [Preparing for hot weather - Camden Council](#). Alongside the Cool spaces network, this summer the Council prepared and distributed free materials to keep residents cool, including reusable water bottles and hand-held fans.

Heat impacts are considered across the Council's work, with climate and public health teams running heat risk workshops with relevant teams to help build their awareness of the risks and how to respond. This includes educating frontline staff, such as social workers and rough sleeping officers, about how they can recognise overheating risks and signpost community members to support resources. An all staff e-learning module on climate is also available, focussed on climate adaptation and resilience.

Considerations of heat impact are also built into our major place-based projects such as the proposed improvements to the public realm in Holborn can help to reduce heat and increase shade. The analysis informing the project can be viewed at [Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood, Heat Resilience Study — Shade the UK](#)

Camden's draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2030 introduces an increased focus on climate resilience and will be considered by Cabinet in December 2025.

QUESTION 3

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES

BY: COUNCILLOR STEVE ADAMS

The proposed works to the Grade II* listed Alexandra Road Estate raise serious concerns. The scheme has not been thermally modelled, and the council's own report admits the risk of increased mould. Insulation is excluded, the existing window frames may not be sturdy enough for proposed new glass and neither frames nor ventilation are costed. The design also threatens the estate's appearance. Given these flaws and risks to residents' health and finances, will the Council pause this project until a fully modelled, comprehensive retrofit is developed to safeguard both the integrity of the estate and the wellbeing of its residents?

REPLY

The Council has worked with heritage experts, Levitt Bernstein, and engineers to design a comprehensive new heating system for the Alexandra and Ainsworth Estate which will provide residents with full control over the heat that they use and pay for. The new communal heating system will be future proofed and ready for the installation of communal heat pumps when the heating plant is due for renewal.

A ventilation strategy has been designed and included within the tender and thermal modelling will take place in parallel with the procurement process – please note, the thermal modelling will inform details of the final design and commissioning of the system, but it will not alter the overall heating solution which has been developed with great care.

Improved glazing, which is also being installed as part of the project will improve the energy efficiency of homes by approximately 30%. Heritage experts, Levitt Bernstein, have confirmed that the new glazing will be suitable for the existing frames. The glazing contractor will survey all properties and will assess whether the window frames will need to be repaired or replaced. Ahead of estate wide works taking place, the appointed contractor will undertake pilots which will be reviewed by consultants.

The scope for additional insulation has been explored for a number of years through the work of Levitt Bernstein, and the strong advice is to proceed with the improved glazing as this is the most cost effective and impactful improvement to make in the immediate term. The Council will continue to evaluate options for additional insulation, which are not determined by the type of heating system to be installed.

This scheme cannot be delayed any further. Comprehensive consultation has taken place over many years with resident representatives and in-depth consultation took place with all residents in 2022, with show flats, drop-in sessions and door knocking.

A survey carried out as part of this work identified that 64% of respondents felt that the need for an upgrade was urgent, similar percentages were keen to have control over the heat in their home and 71% wanted a more reliable heating and hot water system. Of the residents who responded, just 20% were satisfied with the current system.

This detailed design work and analysis by heritage experts, engineers and the views of the wider resident body, led to the development of the tenders now issued and the planning application which gained approval and considered the works to be carried out and their impact on the appearance of the estate.

Turning back to the need for immediate investment. The Council has had considerable concerns regarding the operability of the current heating system at Rowley Way, and the wider Alexandra and Ainsworth Estate, for more than two decades. As it stands, each year the Council repairs multiple leaks and receives many complaints about overheating in the warmer Spring months due to the lack of controls. Some homes are isolated from the hot water supply as pipework is not accessible and cannot be economically repaired and are reliant on immersion heaters.

A review carried out in 2023 found that patch repairs in the previous seven years totalled £800,000, with an additional £200,000 now having to be spent each year on repairs and maintenance and this is just to keep the old system operating at an inadequate level which does not meet residents' needs. On top of this, compensation to residents for the running costs of immersion heaters amounts to approximately £40,000 per annum. These costs are only continuing to increase as the system degrades.

To conclude, it is imperative that this scheme proceeds, and action not delayed further. The provision of a vastly more efficient heat network on the estate with individual controls will improve the quality of life for residents, greatly reduce running costs and carbon emissions, and help residents to make savings, as we have seen elsewhere where full system replacements have taken place.

QUESTION 4

**TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND A SUSTAINABLE
CAMDEN**

BY: COUNCILLOR JAMES SLATER

Prospective tenants seeking housing association homes have shared several problems, including being limited to one family member viewing a property, rather than allowing couples or families to visit together, and a lack of clarity about their position on waiting lists. Many of these homes come through planning gain, with the Council using its planning powers to secure genuinely affordable housing. Is there more the Council can do to set standards relating to accessibility and information for those on our local waiting list hoping to move into a housing association flat?

REPLY

For Camden Council properties, we allow more than one member of a family to come along together to the viewings.

I have heard of cases for Housing Association viewings where, for example, only one spouse is allowed to the viewing is and expected to make the decision on behalf of their partner and potentially wider family. This doesn't make sense to me and doesn't feel terribly humane.

While we do not have direct control over Housing Associations' procedures, we will raise this issue with them and explore room for compromise e.g. balancing the need to manage numbers at group viewings with allowing more than one person to attend.

We will also work to check on what information is made available for those on waiting lists, for all tenure types built and maintained by housing associations in the borough, so that prospective tenants have as much clarity as possible about 'where they are' and what they might expect from being on the list.

QUESTION 5

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES

BY: COUNCILLOR ANNA BURRAGE

As a councillor for Primrose Hill, I've worked closely with residents and the TRA throughout the final years of the major works on the Chalcots Estate. With this significant and complex programme nearing successful completion, and the Home Away from Home scheme due to end, will the Council support the implementation of a Chalcots Local Lettings policy for 6 months? Such an extension would give long-standing residents, many of whom have endured overcrowding, disruption and could not benefit from the scheme while works were underway, a fair opportunity to move into more suitable homes while remaining within their existing community.

REPLY

We are nearing completion of the major works programme which is benefitting more than 700 homes across the Chalcots Estate. This follows the extensive work in 2017/18 to promptly remove the old cladding, install new fire doors and improve fire stopping across the estate following the evacuation of the four taller blocks.

Through this significant major works programme the blocks are receiving an A1 fire rated cladding system (the highest rating for safety), a new non-structural exterior wall with improved solar efficient glazing, along with new roofs and building maintenance units, brickwork replacement to the lower floors, and insulation to ground floor flats where required. This extensive work has been supported by a dedicated team located on the estate who monitor the work closely and have supported residents throughout this extensive work, making sure we consider the needs of all households as we progress.

We fully recognise how extensive and disruptive the works have been and thank residents for their patience and support.

To help support residents we have used about 40 Chalcots flats as 'homes away from home' so that residents did not have to stay in their homes during the internal works. These homes, along with respite lounges have been a key part of the Council's approach to mitigating the impact on residents.

The use of 'homes away from home' has reduced the number of lettings and transfers within the estate in recent years. In recognition of this and the loss of rehousing opportunities, we will be implementing a local lettings plan when reletting these properties. This plan will prioritise tenants from the Chalcots, ensuring that those with housing needs can remain on the estate and continue to contribute to the local community.

QUESTION 6

**TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND A SUSTAINABLE
CAMDEN**

BY: COUNCILLOR RISHI MADLANI

Residents in Bloomsbury often ask us what the impacts of Oxford Street pedestrianisation might be for bus services in the area. Can the Cabinet Member share what insight we currently have on this?

REPLY

Protecting bus journey times, both in the Bloomsbury area and throughout the borough, is a key priority for the Council. We will work closely with Transport for London (TfL) on this transformative West End scheme, whilst ensuring that any potential negative impacts on Camden and our residents are mitigated. These include the provision of additional funding to Camden to investigate and manage any potential traffic displacement onto our road network (which may also affect bus journey times), that TfL do not draw back resources from other major area-based schemes in the nearby area which also seek to support bus journeys (including the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood), and that a full assessment of the Central London-wide impact of the Oxford Street scheme on buses is conducted by TfL before any decision on the scheme is made. We are working closely with the GLA and TfL on these points.

It is clear that the current focus of the Oxford Street plans is on the western end of the street. While this may not necessarily mean there will be no impacts for buses along or near the eastern end of the street, including for Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury, it may mean they prove to be less dramatic than required at the western end.

In November last year Cabinet approved, as part of the next 3-year Camden Transport Strategy Delivery Plan, our Better Buses in Camden project, identifying a series of opportunities and challenges for the bus network in the borough, and a

variety of actions to help ensure more reliable, greener and safer bus journeys. In close partnership with TfL, we are continuing to work through those actions and will provide updates on our work as part of the annual Camden Transport Strategy update report to the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee, with the next such report to that committee in December 2025.

TfL is preparing proposals for consultation later this year, and this will include alternative east west routes for bus services to support a future proposed pedestrianisation scheme on the section of Oxford Street between Orchard Street and Great Portland Street in Westminster.

QUESTION 7

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

BY: COUNCILLOR ROBERT THOMPSON

In the wake of the recent knife crimes on the Kilburn High Road, could the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities outline the ways in which Camden has responded, and in particular, how we have co-operated with Brent Council and the MET Police to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach across the borough and policing boundaries?

REPLY

We recognise that recent knife crime incidents in Kilburn have understandably caused concern and anxiety in the community. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their neighbourhood, and we are committed to working towards that goal.

Camden Council has taken swift and co-ordinated action to reassure the community and address underlying concerns. The Council has worked closely with the Metropolitan Police, Brent Council, and other partners to ensure a joined-up approach across borough and policing boundaries.

Following the stabbings, there has been increased collaboration between Police colleagues, Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT), resident groups, and local partners to provide visible reassurance and tackle community safety concerns. A joint operation involving Brent Council and Police took place on 12th September, resulting in, CCTV intelligence being used to successfully disperse a drug-dealing gang operating along Kilburn High Road.

To strengthen this partnership, fortnightly partnership meetings have been established between the Camden and Brent Council and SNT teams. These meetings focus on intelligence-sharing around hotspot locations and areas of concern, enabling co-ordinated enforcement and support strategies. Through this approach, persistent offenders can be targeted effectively, while individuals requiring support - such as those affected by substance misuse - are signposted to appropriate services, including Camden's Drug and Alcohol Team.

To build local reassurance, officers have conducted walkabouts with Tenant and Resident Association members, most recently on 5th September. Letters have been distributed to residents and businesses, and the Community Safety Team has carried out direct engagement with local traders.

On 17th September, a joint One Kilburn Action Day was held with officers from both Camden and Brent. This initiative identified and addressed a range of issues including graffiti, drug use, illegal street trading, and environmental crime. Weekly enforcement activity is also underway to tackle littering, fly-tipping, and illegal trading, helping to reduce the sense of lawlessness in the area. This work is being carried out in collaboration with Camden's Markets Team and Housing colleagues and will be expanded to include Brent officers from October.

Finally, Camden's Community Safety Team has scheduled a further joint operation with Kilburn SNT on 25th September. Like previous operations, this will focus on hotspot areas and aim to disrupt criminal activity through targeted enforcement and community engagement.

Through these co-ordinated efforts, Camden remains committed to working across boundaries to keep residents safe and ensure Kilburn High Road remains a vibrant and secure place for all.

QUESTION 8

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

BY: COUNCILLOR EDMUND FRONDIGOUN

How is the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force making a difference to the lives of our residents who live on the estates where they are working?

REPLY

Over the past two years, the Council undertook a comprehensive Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Review in response to concerns about the management of complex ASB cases. The review aimed to develop sustainable solutions for long-term issues by reducing fragmentation across the ASB system. Key objectives included improving co-ordination between services, standardising enforcement practices, and enhancing the overall customer experience for residents affected by ASB.

As part of the review's implementation, an ASB Taskforce was established, leading to the recruitment of five dedicated ASB Officers. These officers play a vital role in supporting communities by proactively addressing ASB, particularly in areas disproportionately impacted. Their work focuses not only on enforcement but also promoting early intervention and strengthening multi-agency collaboration to deliver more effective and consistent outcomes.

ASB Officers are improving outcomes for residents on estates. They're achieving this by using a more consistent, data-driven approach. Rather than solely addressing the

impact, dedicated ASB Officers are now focusing on identifying and tackling the root causes of anti-social behaviour in targeted locations. By doing this it is allowing the development of more effective, long-term solutions on estates. By triaging and risk-assessing ASB cases, ASB Officers are identifying and prioritising the most serious incidents at an earlier stage. This ensures that the most vulnerable residents and high-risk situations receive immediate attention and appropriate resources from multiple agencies. ASB officers are managing estate action plans, bringing together various agencies to share intelligence, data, and resources. This collaborative approach with partners like Youth Services, Estate Services or Community Safety Officers is enabling early intervention and providing a more focused response to local problems on estates.

This shift in deployment has led to measurable improvements and increased resident satisfaction as seen in recent resident satisfaction surveys. At the same time the promotion of the Council's ASB communication campaign has helped residents understand the new, more effective processes in place leading to a 95% increase in reporting of ASB since its launch. This transparency, coupled with the commitment to provide an initial response to reports within 48 hours and subsequent engagement by ASB Officers through offering an interview to discuss concerns and actions that can be taken, has shown residents that their concerns are not only heard but acted upon. As a result, residents are seeing more tangible actions, which empowers them and demonstrates the Council's commitment to creating safer communities.

QUESTION 9

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR BEST START FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

BY: COUNCILLOR IZZY LENGA

With children in Camden returning to school, what support is in place to ensure school attendance is the best it can be across the borough this academic year?

REPLY

All Camden schools have assigned School Inclusion Support Officer (SISO) who carry out a termly targeted support meetings to look at action plans to improve attendance as well as emerging themes and challenges for school. Camden Learning RAG rate schools each year based on the previous year's attendance. The number of visits by SISOs for schools with the highest need has increased from three visits a term to four visits. These visits have already commenced this term.

Schools follow the guidance as outlined in the guidance Working together to Improve School Attendance and are required to look at the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively to improve attendance. Schools are able to draw upon Camden Learning, Camden Council, SENDIASS and the voluntary sector resources to discuss cases and help improve attendance. An

attendance bulletin that is sent to all Camden schools highlights national and local guidance as well as best practice.

Schools have access to Camden Learning Attendance Strategy and Resources folder which can help improve attendance. As well as termly comparisons reports from the DFE that highlight school's relative strengths and areas for improvement around attendance.

During the previous school year, Camden Council and Camden Learning ran a small test-and-learn project with three primary schools (Fleet, Rhyl Community, and Primrose Hill) to explore whether a single text message to parents could help improve school attendance. The messages were sent to parents of over 300 students with attendance between 85% and 95%, close to or just over the persistent absence threshold where early action could make a difference. The results showed a small but statistically significant improvement, with around a 1% increase in attendance, which was strongest in the first week after the message was sent. A similar pilot was also run with a secondary (Haverstock) but this did not see the same effect in improving attendance.

Camden Council and Camden Learning are also running further test-and-learn Team Around the School pilots in two primary schools, Primrose Hill and St Patrick's. The pilots started in the final half-term of the previous academic year and will continue to run during the autumn term. The dedicated fortnightly meetings are held between schools and colleagues from the School Inclusion Team, Early Help and the Harwood Family Hub. They focus initially on children whose absence is between 10 and 20% and provide an opportunity to build relationships, understand attendance issues, bring together information about the young person, and make an informed decision on the best support offer.

This year Camden Learning will launch new attendance network meeting each term for schools to reflect on data and share effective and best practice in light of changes to the Ofsted Framework.

A refreshed attendance campaign is currently in Camden Bus stops which builds on key messages around attendance.

In addition to their statutory duty to promote the education of children in care, virtual schools have a non-statutory strategic role in championing the education of children with a social worker. Camden Virtual School has a dedicated Reintegration and Inclusion officer who focuses on improving the attendance of children on CIN/CP plans, bringing the child's network together to tackle 'emotional based school avoidance' encouraging the use of evidence-based, trauma informed interventions between schools, social workers, SEND and Camden Learning colleagues.

There are 7 family support worker posts (1 per primary school) at Argyle, Brecknock, Brookfield, Edith Neville, Fleet, Gospel Oak and Rhyl. They provide early intervention, school-based support to families where attendance or other areas of need e.g. financial issues are impacting the child's wellbeing and families engagement with the school. They often provide a bridge between parents and the

school setting and take a relational approach in addressing low level attendance concerns in their respective settings.

QUESTION 10

TO THE: CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES

BY: COUNCILLOR LORNA JANE RUSSELL

How many council houses have been a). Built b). Bought back c) Sold off and d) Demolished - per ward, each year for the last five years. What is the net gain/loss of social housing per ward over this period?

REPLY

The Council's Community Investment Programme (CIP) is the principal driver of investment in new council housing in the Borough. Launched in 2010, over the last 15 years, it has evolved significantly, ensuring that Camden's communities' needs are put at the forefront of CIP objectives. In the early years of CIP, the focus was on schools' investment but over time, this has shifted to increasing affordable housing delivery, including providing vital community facilities such as the Greenwood Centre, Highgate Newtown Community Centre and Abbey Road Health and Community Centre as well as improvements to estates where works are delivered. In 2022 Cabinet agreed to extend the programme's scale and ambition with a target of delivering 4,850 homes through the lifetime of the programme, 54% of which would be affordable tenures. To date, the programme has delivered over 2,100 homes, 61% of which have been affordable tenures. There are currently 239 affordable homes being built and the programme has a further 1,400 homes approved, 800 of which are affordable tenures, which are progressing through the design and development stages.

Between April 2020 and March 2025, CIP delivered 551 new Council homes in the borough. The tenures of these homes include social rent (156), temporary accommodation (217), refugee housing (97), specialist supported housing (43), hostel accommodation (38). In addition, 30 homes were delivered through partnership arrangements.

In order to deliver new affordable homes on existing estates, sometimes, there is a need to undertake demolition of housing to enable the redevelopment. Demolition only takes place after reviewing all other options, including retrofit. Demolition of council housing allows CIP to deliver replacement council housing of sizes that better matches the housing needs of existing tenants as well as those in the housing register. Estates where demolition has taken place over the last 5 years include Agar Grove estate where 44 Council homes were demolished in 2021, Aspen House in Maitland Park where 36 Council homes were demolished in 2020 and Abbey Road where 70 council homes were demolished in 2023. Homes in Maitland Park have already been re-provided, with construction currently underway in Agar Grove estate and Abbey Road to reprovide the Council housing lost. There is a temporary

reduction in council housing between demolition and new housing being delivered as construction programmes often take 24-36 months to complete.

The Family Friendly programme is looking to tackle overcrowding in the Council's housing stock by purchasing homes that better fit the needs of existing tenants and those in the housing register. 40% of the Council's homes are studios or 1-bed flats while most of the demand on the housing register is for 2 and 3 bed homes. The programme is seeking to fund the acquisitions by releasing a limited number of smaller homes that do not meet the Council's most pressing housing needs, homes that provide unsuitable housing or properties where the Council holds the freehold but there are no tenants remaining. Over the period April 2020 and March 2025, the programme has disposed of 9 homes and acquired 14.

The Right to Buy (RtB) is a scheme that the Council has no control over and allows eligible council tenants to purchase the property they live in at a discounted price. The scheme was established under the Housing Act 1980 and has enabled tenants over decades to buy their homes, often at a price lower than the market value, based on the length of time they have been tenants. The Government has recently announced changes to this policy, and it is expected that this will lead to a reduction in the number of applications going forward as eligibility changes and reduction in discounts are likely to make the scheme less attractive. Over the April 2020-March 2025 the Council lost 198 homes to RtB.

Changes in Affordable Housing per ward and the financial year are shown in the tables below – a negative figure indicates a loss of Affordable Housing

Net Position (INCL. ALL demolitions)						
Wards after 2022	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Belsize	0	0	0	-1	-1	-2
Bloomsbury	-4	-2	-2	-1	0	-9
Camden Square	-44	-8	-2	38	31	15
Camden Town	0	-2	0	0	-1	-3
Fortune Green	-1	-1	-1	0	-2	-5
Frognal	0	-1	0	0	0	-1
Gospel Oak	33	-7	-1	-6	-4	15
Hampstead Town	0	0	0	0	0	0
Haverstock	-2	-5	32	52	-1	76
Highgate	-3	-1	-1	3	-1	-3
Holborn and Covent Garden	0	-2	-3	0	15	10
Kentish Town North	-1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-6
Kentish Town South	-1	-3	-2	-2	48	40
Kilburn	78	-4	-5	-70	-4	-5
Kings Cross	-1	26	-1	-1	-4	19
Primrose Hill	-2	-2	0	-1	0	-5
Regents Park	-3	-4	71	-7	-1	56
South Hampstead	0	-6	-1	-2	-2	-11
St Pancras and Somers Town	-3	75	-6	-5	7	68
West Hampstead	-1	-2	-1	-1	0	-5
Out of Borough	-1	-1	-2	-1	-1	-6
Net Position						238

Note 1: the Council owns some social housing stock in London Borough Barnet and any property acquired by a tenant through RtB there have been captured in the 'out of borough' row.

ENDS