

Full Council – 16 September 2019

1st Motion selected by the Labour Group

Small Changes, Big Impacts – Community Wealth-Building in Brent

This Council notes:

- The Public Services (Social Value) Act was introduced in 2012. It provides a legal basis for public authorities to look for wider social, economic and environmental benefits when undertaking procurement exercises.
- Last year, councils across London spent hundreds of millions of pounds buying in essential goods, services and expertise from the private and third sectors.
- Insourcing, can, involve lower costs, a public sector ethos, economies of scale and an enhanced level of democratic accountability to local residents.
- After years of strife, Preston Council took a different approach to how they operate, and this is now starting to bear fruit. Similarly, we want to see as much of Brent's money invested, in every sense of the word, in this borough.
- This authority has joined the Co-Operative Councils' Innovation Network, a collaboration of 25 like-minded authorities, collectively holding budgets of £8.75 billion – with a view to finding better ways of working for, and with, people to the benefit of their communities.
- Community wealth-building aims to revive local economies, renew trust in local services and deliver a renaissance of local government; by giving local businesses and local communities a bigger stake in the local economy.
- The Labour Party has published a report entitled "Democratising Local Public Services: A Plan for Twenty-First Century Insourcing" setting out its radical blueprint to support and rebuild public services under a future Labour Government.

This council further notes:

- In procuring services over the last two years we've created 164 jobs through contracts; 94 new apprenticeships and 277 training opportunities at BTEC and NVQ equivalent level.
- Over the next two years, through diligent contract management a further £26m will be spent in Brent's local supply chain.
- We have driven up social value, by connecting the widespread regeneration of Brent with the supply chain at our regular "Meet the Buyer" events; with contracts worth a cumulative total of £100m on offer to over 140 small and medium sized enterprises.

- We work with local anchor institutions, recently providing finance to the United Colleges Group for a new site, enhancing post-16 Education and potentially unlocking over one thousand desperately needed homes, at their site in Willesden Green.
- We are proud to have been an accredited a London Living Wage employer through the London Living Wage Foundation since 2013; and, we continue to offer the first business rates discount in the UK for accredited Living Wage Employers in the borough.
- We continue to make in-house and Brent-based options for the services we provide; with this Labour Council insourcing amongst a crowded field: the estate cleaning service, housing management, uniformed street litter patrols, council tax collection and crucially our procurement service.

This Council believes:

- That residents are 8 times more likely to trust local councillors to take decisions on their behalf over and above MPs and Ministers. Furthermore, 5 times more people trust their local councils over and above Government to take the best decisions on their behalf.
- That while residents support their local councils to run services and redistribute wealth, Local Government still requires the financial resources to catalyse new social contracts and make public services, local.

This Councils resolves to call on Cabinet:

- (1) To develop a Social Value and Ethical Procurement Policy setting out how this council can ensure that our local community is central to the way we purchase goods and services, setting out how our small changes can have big impacts across the local economy.
- (2) To demystify the Council's procurement process, through regular training sessions, upskilling more local businesses on the tendering process – to enable Brent based traders to compete on a level playing field with larger corporations and work with Brent Council to provide vital works, services and goods.
- (3) To continue to make provision for in-house services the default option, whilst setting out the strong standards for tendering, bid evaluation and contract management for any other alternative.

Cllr Robert Johnson
Northwick Park Ward