

Full Council – 23 November 2020

1st Labour Group Motion

Green Economic Recovery

The Council Notes:

- That in Brent we face a looming jobs and climate emergency.
- That unemployment in Brent has increased by at least 3,000 people in the period between June 2019 and 2020.
- Nationally there has been over a million jobs lost due to Covid-19; with the Bank of England estimating this will rise to 2.6 million people out of work.
- Earlier this year in Brent Central, nearly half of all our workers were furloughed – the highest proportion in the United Kingdom.
- That before the pandemic, the poverty rate in Brent was 33% higher than the average; with an unemployment rate 6% higher than the national average.
- The work of the Poverty Commission in Brent has highlighted that far too many of our constituents are reliant upon informal and unstable employment – compounded now by a looming jobs crisis.
- The latest U-turn by the Government to extend the furlough scheme until March will come too little too late for many of our residents now out of work.

The Council welcomes this Labour administration's continued commitment to:

- Support our existing and new businesses to survive in the short term and adapt and thrive in the new post-Covid economy.
- Support residents into employment pathways, through an award-winning council-run jobs brokerage service, Brent Works; aiding over 1,000 residents with employment advice, since lockdown began.
- Enable our residents to unlock their potential through upskilling, reskilling, training provision and apprenticeships through our very own adult education college, Brent Start which regularly provides education and training to around 2,500 learners a year.
- Create a skills system responsive to the needs of the future by expanding the range of courses offered by Brent Start, through a £43m investment at Morland Gardens to develop a state-of-the-art education centre, council homes and affordable workspace.

- Working in partnership with our anchor institutions and major employers to use our supply chains and spending power to unlock social value in our procurement processes.
- End low pay - as a big local employer we've led by example and have been accredited as a London Living Wage Employer for seven years in a row since 2013.

This Council believes in a Green economic recovery:

- Brent and its residents have powered London's success story as a global city for decades – our borough is home to people with aspiration, ambition and the ideal that if you work hard, your children will have a better future.
- The Government must provide support to Brent to help us rebuild our local economy and help tackle the climate emergency.
- An international comparison of green stimulus packages suggests that the UK has fallen behind many other advanced economies, which are taking the climate and ecological challenge more seriously.
- The Government's own advisory body, the Committee on Climate Change, has made clear, we are not on track to meet our net zero 2050 target.
- Many manufacturers and construction businesses have been at the forefront of the transition to the low-carbon, green economy of the future; and others are keen to engage in that transition, but currently lack the levers to do so. It has been estimated that to meet the net zero target, sectors such as steel and cement will need to reduce emissions by 94% and 93% respectively, by 2040.
- It's time for a bold and ambitious plan to deliver thousands of jobs in Brent which can also tackle the climate crisis. We can harness the opportunities for green growth and the technologies of the future – but only if the Government makes the right decisions and works with Brent to recover jobs, retrain workers and rebuild businesses.
- With looming unemployment, the right thing to do for our economy is to invest in the jobs of the future now.

This Council Resolves:

- To call on the government to support a green economic recovery and with the help of British industry, accelerate energy retrofitting programmes - creating jobs, making homes warmer, reducing bills, and driving down emissions.
- To call on the government to fund a green economic recovery that would leave no worker behind, supporting them to build on their skills through existing programmes like Brent Start and equip our workers with the skills for our future economy.
- To reaffirm our commitment to the interlinked efforts of the council, aimed at improving the prosperity of our communities; from the work of Poverty Commission, the Brent Black Community Action Plan, the Climate Emergency strategy and the Keep Brent Working campaign.
- To request that the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment and Skills write to Government to call for:

- A commitment to a major investment package in employment and skills support alongside the furlough scheme; and raise the wage floor for furloughed workers so nobody is left facing poverty during this difficult period.
- An urgent re-think on plans to withdraw the £20 per week boost to Universal Credit, which has been a lifeline to many Brent residents out of work during the pandemic.

Councillor Elliot Chappell
Willesden Green Ward