

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

To consider the following Motions of which notice has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4 (i)

A. Councillors Adam Higgs and Bruce Lines have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

" This Council shares the concerns of residents about illegal encampments on public open spaces and other areas in the city. The Council believes everyone should be welcome in this city as long as they are law-abiding and have respect for other residents and visitors. Behaviour which blocks public access to parks, intimidates residents, damages property and leaves behind mess that has to be cleared at tax payers' expense should not be tolerated from anyone regardless of their background.

The Council condemns the damage and disruption caused by individuals and groups who unlawfully set up encampments in the city in recent years, such as on popular local places such as Daisy Farm Park and Pype Hayes Park.

Preventing illegal incursions, and evicting illegal encampments as quickly as possible requires a robust joint response by both the Council and the Police, too often the response is too slow and too variable across the city which encourages those intent on acting in this way in coming to Birmingham and moving around the city from park to park as and when evictions are eventually carried out. The Council believes a City wide injunction is needed to prevent this.

Given the cost to tax payers associated with this activity – including legal fees and the cleaning costs – this Council also believes that more should be done to seek to recover the costs to the public purse from the perpetrators.

The Council notes the Government's response to its consultation on powers for dealing with unauthorised encampments and welcomes proposals for additional powers to the police, including:

- Ability to direct trespassers to suitable sites in neighbouring local authorities (currently the police can only direct trespassers to sites within the local authority).
- To increase the period of time in which trespassers directed from land would be unable to return (from 3 to 12 months).
- Ability to act on encampments where two or more vehicles are present (currently there has to be 6 or more).
- Allows police to remove trespassers on land which forms part of the highway.

The Council also notes that the Government intends to consult on making deliberate trespass a criminal offence, as it already the case in the Republic of Ireland where it has shown to be effective in tackling the problem of unauthorised encampments.

The Council resolves to

- Write to the Government expressing its support for all the proposed additional powers for the police as well as for legislation making deliberate trespass a criminal offence. This letter should make the case for both of these to be implemented as soon as possible.
- Work with the West Midlands Police to adopt a zero tolerance approach to all unauthorised encampments, ensuring all existing powers are used to evict trespassers as soon as possible.
- Ask the Executive to implement as soon as possible a city wide injunction against unauthorised encampments and fly-tipping to enable the speedy removal of such encampments and prevent the practice of moving from site to site within the city boundaries.
- Request the relevant Director and officers to see what more can be done to recover costs through the courts from trespassers for the associated legal fees, repairs to property and cleaning costs and to report back to Council Business Management Committee.
- Proactively work with local communities and ward councillors to identify areas vulnerable to trespass and install measures to deter unauthorised encampments and that the relevant officers report back on steps taken to Council Business Management Committee.
- Promote clearer reporting mechanisms for residents so that swift action can be taken at the first sign of unauthorised encampments being set up and that the relevant officers report back on steps taken to Council Business Management Committee."

B. Councillors Roger Harmer and Morriam Jan have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

"This Council notes with great concern the desperate shortage of socially rented housing in Birmingham, which is having a terrible impact on its residents in housing need. This impact includes:

- The homeless having to wait for months in temporary accommodation, often outside the City, badly disrupting their lives.
- Residents having to live permanently in overcrowded accommodation, with no prospect of moving to a home large enough for their needs.

This Council also notes that this shortage of socially rented housing has developed over 40 years, with insufficient investment in new socially rented accommodation to replace that lost to 'right to buy', year after year. This process is continuing with only a small percentage of 'affordable housing' being built each year as socially rented housing.

This Council therefore agrees:

- To lobby Parliament to provide the funding to support the building of 100,000 units of socially rented housing a year nationally, with a fair share, according to need, in Birmingham;
- To lobby Parliament to suspend 'right to buy' until no-one is living in temporary accommodation and reform its funding so that when it restarts, there is the funding to replace each unit sold;
- To actively publicise not just the proportion of 'affordable housing' in each new development, but also the proportion of socially rented housing."

C. Councillors Ian Ward and Akhlaq Ahmed have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

"This council notes

- Local government has endured central government funding cuts of nearly 50% since 2010. - Between 2010 and 2020, councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 they have received from central government.
- The 2019 LGA survey of council finances found that 1 in 3 councils fear they will run out of funding to provide even their statutory, legal duties by 2022/23. This number rises to almost two thirds of councils by 2024/2025 or later.
- The LGA estimates councils will face a funding gap of £8 billion by 2025.
- Faced with these cuts from central government, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing 22 per cent of their value since 2009/10.
- At the same time as seeing their pay go down in real terms, workers experience ever increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, an estimated 876,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of 30 per cent. Local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector.
- There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three quarters of the local government workforce.

This council believes:

- Local Government workers provide an invaluable safety net for people and communities across the country and without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services residents rely on would not be deliverable.

- Government funding has been cut to the extent that a proper pay rise could result in a reduction in local government services.
- The government needs to take responsibility and fully fund increases in pay; it should not put the burden on local authorities whose funding been cut to the bone.

This council resolves to

- Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State in support of the pay claim submitted by GMB, UNISON and Unite on behalf of council and school workers for a £10 per hour minimum wage and a 10 per cent uplift across all other pay points in 2020/21 - calling for this increase to be fully funded with new money from central government.
- Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim.
- Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim.
- Encourage all local government workers to join a union.”