

COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS

Motion 3: Boycott the Anti-Boycott Bill

Amendment moved by Cllr Santiago Bell-Bradford

This Council notes:

- The “Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill”, otherwise known as the "anti-boycott bill", is slowly making its way through Parliament, and passed its second reading in July.
- The government’s planned anti-boycott bill poses a threat to local democracy, freedom of expression and civil society campaigns. It will shield states involved in practices that many people in this country find abhorrent, including genocide and occupation.
- If approved, the bill will restrict the ability of public bodies such as local authorities, universities, and some pension funds to make ethical decisions about investment and procurement. It will violate the rights of individual pension holders to invest their pensions in line with their values.
- [The Labour Party tabled an amendment to the bill which sought to allow public bodies to make their own investment and procurement decisions and remove the threat of fines, ensuring that that such decisions are in accordance with an ethical investment framework that is applied equally across the board. This amendment was defeated in the House of Commons](#)
- A broad coalition of over seventy organisations including charities, trade unions, human rights and faith organisations are working publicly to stop the bill, alongside the Scottish government.
- [Sacha Deshmukh, Amnesty International UK's Chief Executive, called the bill “pernicious” and said “it will close off a key means to hold companies to account and once again show that this Government thinks little of the plight of persecuted communities around the world.”](#)
- Lisa Nandy, MP for Wigan, revealed that the Labour Party has taken legal advice over the bill, calling it “bad law” and stating that lawyers had raised concerns that the bill could lead the way for endless litigation in the courts over the practice of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).

This Council further notes:

- Procurement of goods and services is an important part of councils' expenditure with third party revenue expenditure totalling around £60 billion a year across local government. This council spends £650million with almost 6,000 providers.
- In our progressive procurement strategy – adopted in 2020 – we seek to encourage and amplify the award of work, supply and service contracts to companies and professionals that perform public contracts with a business model based on ethical behaviour, and to promote democratic participation and drive social innovation.
- The framework incorporates a series of mandatory ethical requirements that we expect of ourselves and from those who want to do business with the council. By ethical behaviour, we define this as decent wages, fair employment practices, safeguards against modern slavery and environmental sustainability.
- In 2018, Islington became the first council nationally to sign the Charter Against Modern Slavery
- Over 80 local authorities across the UK have now signed the Charter, which Islington Council helped draft. Addressing modern slavery is a key priority for the council, with work on it overseen by the Safer Islington Partnership. We have an ongoing training programme to assist staff and partners to identify the signs of modern slavery.
- We use our leverage as a major commissioner to encourage suppliers to support and endorse accreditations and charters such as ethical procuring and supply chain visibility.
- Trade Unions have an important role to play in the fight against modern slavery and exploitation by supporting and championing workers' rights. Workers and providers are frequently not aware of their rights and responsibilities. It is for that reason that the Council has taken a stand against blacklisting of trade union members and emphasise this requirement as mandatory.
- BDS has a centuries-long tradition as a successful method of peaceful protest and local government has played its part in following this democratic political practice.
- BDS campaigns have been used by social movements to change the course of history for the better.
- Concerned members of the public and local authorities have championed BDS tactics in prominent campaigns such as the 1963 Bristol bus boycott, the rejection of sugar produced on slave plantations, led by nineteenth century British citizens, and divestment from fossil fuel companies. The best-known boycott was the campaign to end apartheid in South Africa.
- During the campaign to end South African apartheid, similar limitations were introduced. Nonetheless, millions of people, including local councils, continued their support for the movement.

- In 2016, a UK High Court ruled that the boycotts of Israeli settlement goods by local authorities in Leicester and Wales were not anti-Semitic, nor did they contravene laws on equality.
- Restricting the ability of local councils to engage in BDS is wrong. In a world where Uyghur's, undergoing ethnic cleansing, are forced to produce garments and commodities, where local government pension funds are invested in arms companies known to be complicit in violations of Palestinian human rights, and where Saudi Arabia, accused of crimes against humanity, is the world's largest oil exporter, we need these tactics to hold those complicit to account.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the ~~leaders of the Labour and Conservative parties~~ Prime Minister to share, and ask him to consider, the legal opinion published by the Labour Party on the rights of councils to boycott oppressive regimes and illegal practices, emphasising the need for councils to ~~retain the ability to engage in BDS campaigning~~ make their own decisions on procurement and investment matters.
- ~~Review~~ Continue to ensure that our own ethical procurement strategy ~~to ensure that our~~ doesn't include procuring goods and services ~~are not~~ produced by oppressive regimes ~~the world's oppressed peoples.~~

The amended motion would read as follows:

Motion 3: Boycott the Anti-Boycott Bill

This Council notes:

- The “Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill”, otherwise known as the "anti-boycott bill", is slowly making its way through Parliament, and passed its second reading in July.
- The government’s planned anti-boycott bill poses a threat to local democracy, freedom of expression and civil society campaigns. It will shield states involved in practices that many people in this country find abhorrent, including genocide and occupation.
- If approved, the bill will restrict the ability of public bodies such as local authorities, universities, and some pension funds to make ethical decisions about investment and procurement. It will violate the rights of individual pension holders to invest their pensions in line with their values.
- The Labour Party tabled an amendment to the bill which sought to allow public bodies to make their own investment and procurement decisions and remove the threat of fines, ensuring that that such decisions are in accordance with an ethical investment framework that is applied equally across the board. This amendment was defeated in the House of Commons
- A broad coalition of over seventy organisations including charities, trade unions, human rights and faith organisations are working publicly to stop the bill, alongside the Scottish government.
- Sacha Deshmukh, Amnesty International UK's Chief Executive, called the bill “pernicious” and said “it will close off a key means to hold companies to account and once again show that this Government thinks little of the plight of persecuted communities around the world.”
- Lisa Nandy, MP for Wigan, revealed that the Labour Party has taken legal advice over the bill, calling it “bad law” and stating that lawyers had raised concerns that the bill could lead the way for endless litigation in the courts over the practice of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).

This Council further notes:

- Procurement of goods and services is an important part of councils’ expenditure with third party revenue expenditure totalling around £60 billion a year across local government. This council spends £650million with almost 6,000 providers.
- In our progressive procurement strategy – adopted in 2020 – we seek to encourage and amplify the award of work, supply and service contracts to companies and professionals that perform public contracts with a business model based on ethical behaviour, and to promote democratic participation and drive social innovation.

- The framework incorporates a series of mandatory ethical requirements that we expect of ourselves and from those who want to do business with the council. By ethical behaviour, we define this as decent wages, fair employment practices, safeguards against modern slavery and environmental sustainability.
- In 2018, Islington became the first council nationally to sign the Charter Against Modern Slavery
- Over 80 local authorities across the UK have now signed the Charter, which Islington Council helped draft. Addressing modern slavery is a key priority for the council, with work on it overseen by the Safer Islington Partnership. We have an ongoing training programme to assist staff and partners to identify the signs of modern slavery.
- We use our leverage as a major commissioner to encourage suppliers to support and endorse accreditations and charters such as ethical procuring and supply chain visibility.
- Trade Unions have an important role to play in the fight against modern slavery and exploitation by supporting and championing workers' rights. Workers and providers are frequently not aware of their rights and responsibilities. It is for that reason that the Council has taken a stand against blacklisting of trade union members and emphasise this requirement as mandatory.
- BDS has a centuries-long tradition as a successful method of peaceful protest and local government has played its part in following this democratic political practice.
- BDS campaigns have been used by social movements to change the course of history for the better.
- Concerned members of the public and local authorities have championed BDS tactics in prominent campaigns such as the 1963 Bristol bus boycott, the rejection of sugar produced on slave plantations, led by nineteenth century British citizens, and divestment from fossil fuel companies. The best-known boycott was the campaign to end apartheid in South Africa.
- During the campaign to end South African apartheid, similar limitations were introduced. Nonetheless, millions of people, including local councils, continued their support for the movement.
- In 2016, a UK High Court ruled that the boycotts of Israeli settlement goods by local authorities in Leicester and Wales were not anti-Semitic, nor did they contravene laws on equality.
- Restricting the ability of local councils to engage in BDS is wrong. In a world where Uyghur's, undergoing ethnic cleansing, are forced to produce garments and commodities, where local government pension funds are invested in arms companies known to be complicit in violations of Palestinian human rights, and where Saudi Arabia, accused of crimes against humanity, is the world's largest oil exporter, we need these tactics to hold those complicit to account.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Prime Minister to share, and ask him to consider, the legal opinion published by the Labour Party on the rights of councils to boycott oppressive regimes and illegal practices, emphasising the need for councils to make their own decisions on procurement and investment matters.
- Continue to ensure that our own ethical procurement strategy doesn't include procuring goods and services produced by oppressive regimes,

Motion 4: Islington Child Friendly Community

Amendment moved by Cllr Michelline Safi Ngongo

This Council notes:

- Nationally and in London, several councils have progressed to or become child-friendly communities. ~~That Lambeth council and Redbridge council have successfully applied to become UNICEF Child Friendly Communities.~~
- That the Council's Corporate Plan, *Islington Together 2030*, includes five missions, of which one is to create a "Child-friendly Islington - where all children and young people are rooted in a community where they feel safe, can thrive and are able to be part of and lead change".
- That the Islington Labour manifesto for the 2022 Local Elections included the commitment to "to create a child-friendly Islington, maximising the opportunities for safe play and outdoor activities, developing more open spaces for children and young people across the borough and ensuring all our plans consider what impact they will have on children."
- That ~~the programme aims~~ the Council is currently working on a Child-Friendly Islington strategy where we aim to create ~~cities and communities in the UK~~ a borough where all children have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.
- ~~That UNICEF provide training based to support councils to put children's rights in practice as part of a three-to-five-year journey towards recognition as a UNICEF UK Child Friendly Community.~~
- That embarking on our Child-Friendly Islington ~~this~~ programme ~~could~~ will aim to rectify some of the challenges faced by children in Islington by improving and integrating services, adopting poverty reduction measures, and tackling discrimination.

This Council further notes:

- That many of Islington's children and young people are growing up in poverty; exposed to violent crime and high levels of air pollution.
- That Islington had one of the highest rates of child poverty in the country before the pandemic, with two-fifths of all children in Islington living below the poverty line.
- That children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty: 48% are now in poverty, compared with 25% of children in white British families. Structural racism results in Black children and young people being disproportionately affected by these disadvantages and that the impact of Covid-19 has been to worsen many existing problems and inequalities.

- That Islington has been taking steps in recent years to support and protect the wellbeing of children and young people, such as through the bold and ambitious Islington Together 2030 plan and its 5 missions, the 'Putting Children First' Education Plan 2030, and the Bright Start 2023-28 Strategy for all children in Islington to have the best start in life.
- That the Council continues to protect children's centres, youth services, our childcare bursary and has recently opened Family Hubs to give all children the best possible start in life.
- That in 2009, thanks to Islington Labour councillors, the Council became one of the first in the country to provide universal free school meals for all primary school children, and has protected them since. This policy has been replicated by other councils and this year, has been rolled out across London by the Labour Mayor of London.
- That in 2020, Islington Council's Children's Services were rated 'outstanding' by OFSTED due to an "unwavering commitment to improving and enriching the lives of children and their families".
- That Islington council has listened to young people through the Fair Futures Commission and Let's Talk Islington.
- That Islington has range of ways for young people, parents and carers' voices influence a better Islington such as the a Youth Council and a Young Mayor and Deputy, the Children's Active Involvement Service for care-experienced children, parent forums and parent champions, as well as with two members acting as Young People's Champions.

This Council resolves to:

- To ~~apply to become a~~ adopt the principles of the UNICEF Child Friendly Community programme in putting together our own Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to put the rights of children and young people at the centre of decision-making; amplify the voices of children and young people; and support them to access more opportunities.
- To genuinely engage with children and young people through the creation of our Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to ensure that their voices are central to the development of the programme.
- To use ~~this process~~ our Child-Friendly Islington programme to improve the conditions in which children and young people develop in Islington so that they are safer, healthier and happier. To do this by focusing on good quality housing, education, cultural and sporting activities, access to green space and play areas, and encouraging active travel.
- To continue to demonstrate our its commitment to the borough's children through the budget process by prioritising frontline services, investing in activities for young people and protecting the things that matter most to local young people. ~~examining how the budget impacts children and ensuring that~~

~~children, and particularly disadvantaged children, get their fair share of resources.~~

- To ~~give~~ ensure relevant council officers, such as social workers and housing officers, ~~the opportunity to take UNICEF's training about putting children's rights into practice~~ are aware and mindful of the need to put children's rights into practice and make sure the borough's children are considered in all decisions taken.
- To ~~be open to working~~ work with local partners, such as the police and community organisations, to raise awareness of children's rights across the borough and put these into practice across the entire scope of services.
- ~~To commit to working with partners to find sufficient investment to fund posts and activities to deliver these objectives.~~

The amended motion would read as follows:

Motion 4: Islington Child Friendly Community

This Council notes:

- Nationally and in London, several councils have progressed to or become child-friendly communities.
- That the Council's Corporate Plan, *Islington Together 2030*, includes five missions, of which one is to create a "Child-friendly Islington - where all children and young people are rooted in a community where they feel safe, can thrive and are able to be part of and lead change".
- That the Islington Labour manifesto for the 2022 Local Elections included the commitment to "to create a child-friendly Islington, maximising the opportunities for safe play and outdoor activities, developing more open spaces for children and young people across the borough and ensuring all our plans consider what impact they will have on children."
- That the Council is currently working on a Child-Friendly Islington strategy where we aim to create a borough where all children have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.
- That embarking on our Child-Friendly Islington programme will aim to rectify some of the challenges faced by children in Islington by improving and integrating services, adopting poverty reduction measures, and tackling discrimination.

This Council further notes:

- That many of Islington's children and young people are growing up in poverty; exposed to violent crime and high levels of air pollution.
- That Islington had one of the highest rates of child poverty in the country before the pandemic, with two-fifths of all children in Islington living below the poverty line.
- That children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty: 48% are now in poverty, compared with 25% of children in white British families. Structural racism results in Black children and young people being disproportionately affected by these disadvantages and that the impact of Covid-19 has been to worsen many existing problems and inequalities.
- That Islington has been taking steps in recent years to support and protect the wellbeing of children and young people, such as through the bold and ambitious Islington Together 2030 plan and its 5 missions, the 'Putting Children

First' Education Plan 2030, and the Bright Start 2023-28 Strategy for all children in Islington to have the best start in life.

- That the Council continues to protect children's centres, youth services, our childcare bursary and has recently opened Family Hubs to give all children the best possible start in life.
- That in 2009, thanks to Islington Labour councillors, the Council became one of the first in the country to provide universal free school meals for all primary school children, and has protected them since. This policy has been replicated by other councils and this year, has been rolled out across London by the Labour Mayor of London.
- That in 2020, Islington Council's Children's Services were rated 'outstanding' by OFSTED due to an "unwavering commitment to improving and enriching the lives of children and their families".
- That Islington council has listened to young people through the Fair Futures Commission and Let's Talk Islington.
- That Islington has range of ways for young people, parents and carers' voices influence a better Islington such as the Youth Council and a Young Mayor and Deputy, the Children's Active Involvement Service for care-experienced children, parent forums and parent champions, as well as two members acting as Young People's Champions.

This Council resolves to:

- To adopt the principles of the UNICEF Child Friendly Community programme in putting together our own Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to put the rights of children and young people at the centre of decision-making; amplify the voices of children and young people; and support them to access more opportunities.
- To genuinely engage with children and young people through the creation of our Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to ensure that their voices are central to the development of the programme.
- To use our Child-Friendly Islington programme to improve the conditions in which children and young people develop in Islington so that they are safer, healthier and happier. To do this by focusing on good quality housing, education, cultural and sporting activities, access to green space and play areas, and encouraging active travel.
- To continue to demonstrate our commitment to the borough's children through the budget process by prioritising frontline services, investing in activities for young people and protecting the things that matter most to local young people.
- To ensure relevant council officers, such as social workers and housing officers, are aware and mindful of the need to put children's rights into practice and make sure the borough's children are considered in all decisions taken.

- To work with local partners, such as the police and community organisations, to raise awareness of children's rights across the borough and put these into practice across the entire scope of services.