

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Full Council on 10 July 2019

Agenda item 20: Notices of Motion

Three Notices of Motion have been received and will be moved and seconded at the meeting. Both meet the requirements of Council Procedure Rule 12:

MOTION 1: Climate Emergency

Proposed by: Councillor Briski

Seconded by: Councillor Mortimer

“This Council acknowledges the scientific consensus on the effects of anthropogenic climate change and recognises this Authority’s role in mitigating the impact of the impending climate disaster. This Council hereby declares a climate emergency in recognition of the catastrophic effect of changing weather patterns and this Motion will direct the policy of this Authority as follows:

1. This Council is committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions in all its operations as soon as reasonably possible and no later than 2050. This commitment to reducing carbon emissions will be reflected in all future tenders and this Authority will engage with its supply chain to reduce the carbon emissions from its operations.
2. This Council recognises the irreversible damage already caused to global climate systems and the significant threat this poses to Hertsmere. As such, this Authority commits to resilience against a changing climate and the urgent need to remain conscious of this when considering matters relating to the long-term future of this Borough.
3. This Authority will explore innovative methods of reducing its carbon footprint and encourage the same when considering matters within this Authority’s jurisdiction.”

MOTION 2: Democracy & Council Procedure

Proposed by: Councillor Newmark

Seconded by: Councillor Evans

“This Council Notes:

1. That members of minority/opposition groups now comprise approximately 25% of Hertsmere Borough Council.
2. The constitutions and procedural rules of most local authorities make formal provision for the discussion of ‘Opposition Business’ as part of the agenda at Full Council meetings.
3. Historically, this was the case at Hertsmere Borough Council.¹
4. Widely acclaimed initiatives, such as the Borough’s ‘Community Toilet Scheme’ came about as a result of ‘Opposition Business’ debates at Full Council.

This Council Believes:

1. That Full Council meetings must deliver a balance between formal/statutory business; holding the administration accountable; and formulation/approval of policy on key issues of relevance to local people.

¹ See Council Procedure Rule para 2.1 (xii) as removed by Council on 16/9/2015

2. That the business of Full Council meetings should reflect the political plurality of the authority.
3. The current position whereby Opposition Groups are forced to utilise Councillor Questions, Responses to Reports and Notices of Motion to initiate policy debate at Full Council, is suboptimal.
4. Restoring Opposition Business would enhance the internal democracy and accountability of this Council.

This Council Resolves:

1. To task officers with preparing a report, drawing upon examples of best practice, setting out options for amending the Council's Rules of Procedure to (re-)introduce Opposition Business at meetings of Full Council.
2. That this report be tabled and discussed at a meeting of the Constitution and Member Development Panel by 1 September 2019 and any resulting Constitutional Amendment tabled at a meeting of Full Council before 30 November 2019."

MOTION 3: Take Pride in Hertsmere for LGBTQ+ community

Proposed by: Councillor Gray

Seconded by: Councillor Myers

Take Pride in Hertsmere for LGBTQ+ community

2Pride 2019 marks fifty years since queer people of colour led the Stonewall uprising in New York. This series of events sparked the modern Pride movement. We saw the first Gay Pride rally in London in 1972 and we have come a long way since then. It has been a bumpy road, the AIDS pandemic of the Eighties, anti-gay speeches were rife in UK political life, at the highest level, leading to the first piece of homophobic legislation in over a hundred years hurdles which the LGBTQ+ have had to overcome.

Growing up in a mining town as a queer kid in the Eighties really wasn't much fun. Section 28 made my life and the lives of many others within my community a living hell. The physical and emotion damage that this homophobic legislation caused to so many is heart breaking. I am lucky that I had a supportive family, many other children didn't and are now tragically no longer with us.

Despite the progress which has been made, the fight is as relevant now as it has ever been. In recent weeks we have seen high profile attacks on numerous members of the LGBTQ+ community. None more shocking than that of a Lesbian couple on a London bus who were physically attacked for simply being who they are. Another worrying trend is the increase of reported attacks on Trans members of the community, with 28 in Hertfordshire reported in the last year alone, Jane Fae, a Trans campaigner who has been surveying the Trans community has reported that 70-80% of those she has spoken to have suffered some kind of abuse.

It is time for Hertsmere Borough Council to show their support and inclusivity of the LGBTQ+ community, MOTION

Council Notes:

1. The 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

2. The increased level of attacks on Trans people, including in Hertfordshire.
3. The increased level of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
4. Hertfordshire Pride 2019 will take place at the end of August 2019.

Council Believes:

1. Hertsmere should take a lead in combatting homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in our communities
2. Hertsmere could do more to work with and support the local LGBTQ+ community
3. LGBT people are disproportionately affected by homelessness and often have poor experiences of housing services.
4. One in eight LGBTQ+ people avoid going to the gym or participating in sports groups because of fear of discrimination and harassment. Trans people are particularly vulnerable, with two in five avoiding these places.
5. Too many people are attacked, verbally and physically, because of their sexual orientation or trans identity. Many LGBTQ+ people don't feel safe, with one in five having experienced a hate crime or incident due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months.

Council Resolves:

1. To fly the pride flag throughout pride month each year at the Civic Offices, commencing with an official flag raising ceremony involving civic leaders.
2. To display the pride Logo at all Hertsmere owned buildings throughout pride month each year.
3. To join Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Hertfordshire County Council in becoming sponsors of Hertfordshire Pride.
4. To fly the pride flag on 31st August in support of Herts Pride 2019.
5. To work towards the Stonewall Seal of Approval and the Stonewall list of top 100 employers, beginning with a review of the inclusion and diversity and equality policies.
6. To work with our local LGBTQ+ community and police to identify areas where LGBTQ+ people feel vulnerable, and take steps to improve community safety including providing resource and support to local community groups, or raising awareness in the local community about LGBTQ+ equality.
7. Encourage local housing services and providers to provide training and awareness raising on issues such as LGBTQ+ hate crime and community safety.
8. To raise awareness of factors that can lead to homelessness in LGBTQ+ young people, and work with schools and community groups to ensure that all aspects of a young person's identity and family life are considered in keeping young people safe from harm.

9. To support local sports clubs and community groups to engage with national campaigns to end LGBTQ+ discrimination in sport, such as supporting the Rainbow Laces campaign.
10. To ensure that local leisure facilities operated on behalf of Hertsmere by Inspire All, consider and meet the needs of LGBTQ+ service users, in particular, a zero tolerance approach to the use of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language in sport and leisure spaces, and ensuring that trans people feel confident in using facilities appropriate to their gender identity.