

EALING SOUTHALL CLP



Labour

19th April, 2020

Sir Keir Starmer MP
Angela Rayner MP
NEC members

Dear Sir Keir Starmer MP, Angela Rayner MP, NEC Members,

The Executive Committee of Ealing Southall CLP writes to express its disgust at, and condemnation of, the abusive and damaging behaviours of certain senior staff brought to light in the Labour Party report 'The work of the Labour Party's Governance and Legal Unit in Relation to Anti-Semitism, 2014-2019' ('the Report').

Many members will by now have read, in whole or in part, the findings of the Report, which reveal that a small but influential group of Labour Party employees, working in both national and London Region roles, were engaged in behaviours that would breach the staff policies and working practices of any modern and progressive employer – and which acted against the wider interests of the Labour Party.

Separate to those policies and practices, we would remind you of the NEC Codes of Conduct (Appendix 9, Rule Book 2020) on Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination; Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Racism; Social Media Policy; and the Member's Pledge, which states: "I pledge to act within the spirit and rules of the Labour Party in my conduct both on and offline, with members and non-members and I stand against all forms of abuse. I understand that if found to be in breach of the Labour Party policy on online and offline abuse, I will be subject to the rules and procedures of the Labour Party".

We acknowledge the statement from Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner that an independent investigation into the Report will be urgently commissioned. We understand that the investigation will look into the background and circumstances in which the report was commissioned, at the contents and wider culture and practices referred to in the report, and at the circumstances in which the report was put into the public domain.

As members of Ealing Southall CLP, we have worked tirelessly for the election of Labour representatives at local, national and European elections throughout the period framed within the Report. At the 2017 General Election, due in large part to the efforts of Labour Party activists within Ealing Southall and nationally, we came within 2,500 votes of electing the Labour Government our country so desperately needs. We urge the Labour Party's leadership to instruct any independent investigation into the Report to focus as a priority on the injurious behaviours of individuals named, rather than on the circumstances in which the Report was leaked to the media.

We believe that the obstructive culture and damaging factional behaviours exposed by the Report are similar to those experienced by our own CLP in our interactions with certain Labour Party national and regional full-time employees – where our attempts to engage in, or to deliver, democratic Party processes have been wilfully obstructed by party official. For this reason, we welcome the fact that the Report has seen light of day. The many new members that have joined, paid fees to, and campaigned tirelessly for the Labour Party since 2015 must never again be disparaged and mistreated by a factional minority who would engage in racist, misogynistic, ableist and bullying behaviours in order to further their own political agenda.

We ask the NEC to consider how BAME members can feel safe within the Labour Party if the whistleblowers of racism are dealt with more harshly than those who are accused of it? How members engage with and work on behalf of the Party if those complicit in our defeat in 2017 are not suspended, but rewarded with new positions? And how the Jewish community will regain trust in us if no action is taken against those who deliberately mishandled and ignored complaints, in order to stoke fears for factional gain?

The integrity of our Party is at stake, and we ask the NEC to recognise and reflect upon the frustration and anger the membership feels at this time.

We call on the NEC:

- To immediately suspend from Party membership those Labour Party employees who have violated the terms of their membership, pending full investigation and appropriate action.
- To proceed with an independent investigation into the Report, with terms of reference set by the NEC that focus on the contents and alleged behavioural misconduct, and not allow the investigation to become a factional attack on whistleblowers.
- To officially publish the Report, in full, from the Labour Party and then to expeditiously produce a publicly available report on the independent investigation into the Report.
- To ensure that the Labour Party has in place a set of staff policies, employer culture and values, and disciplinary processes that are fit for purpose – and which truly reflect and reinforce the values of equality, respect democratic participation.

In solidarity,

Chaudhry Qamer Iqbal
Secretary
On behalf of Executive Committee
Of Ealing Southall CLP