

Open Letter to the Councillors of Whitechapel, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

We signatories, people who live, study, work and use community facilities in Whitechapel Ward are writing this open letter to the three Councillors, Faroque Ahmed, Shah Ameen and Victoria Obaze to stand with us, people with protected characteristics, guaranteed by law against the discriminatory consultation on Liveable Streets by the Tower Hamlets Council Contractor, PCL Consult.

We ask them to stand with us against discrimination, direct and indirect on the basis of age, disability, socio-economic inequality (class), race, gender and faith. Furthermore, we demand this be demonstrated publicly, with a clear rejection of the whip on Liveable Streets.

We do not accept the excuse of a collective decision, as it is illegal and is in breach of the Public Sector Equality Duty as laid out in the Equality Act 2010. We would also remind them of the Labour Party Constitution, which states:

“No member of the Party shall engage in conduct which in the opinion of the NEC is prejudicial, or in any act which in the opinion of the NEC is grossly detrimental to the Party. The NEC shall take account of any codes of conduct currently in force and shall regard any incident which in their view might reasonably be seen to demonstrate hostility or prejudice based on age; disability; gender reassignment or identity; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation as conduct prejudicial to the Party: these shall include but not be limited to incidents involving racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia or otherwise racist language, sentiments, stereotypes or actions, sexual harassment, bullying or any form of intimidation towards another person on the basis of a protected characteristic as determined by the NEC, wherever it occurs, as conduct prejudicial to the Party.”

We feel we have no choice but to publicly rebuke them in this manner, when they as our elected representatives told residents they agreed with their case of discrimination, only to discover at the Council meeting they voted to dismiss the complaint. Adding insult to injury, a complaint against discrimination, with over 2,000 signatures was dismissed as somehow we were denying climate change. This is not true, the complaint was one of discrimination and all we asked was for it to be investigated, for the law to be upheld and safeguarding measures to be implemented.

To conclude, we expect our elected representatives to uphold the law, and live up to the claim of the Labour Party as an anti-racist party. Residents with protected characteristics are the same as any other residents, we have the same aspirations and concerns as our neighbours. What we will never accept is to be discriminated against, treated as second class citizens and for any complaints to be covered up.



We demand, they resign the whip on Liveable Streets publicly, and join the residents in a public call:

1. For the Liveable Streets consultation and PCL consult to be suspended. For an independent investigation to be conducted in regard to the complaint.
2. The consultation to be run again, this time led by Tower Hamlets Council Officers who have experience working with diverse and disadvantaged communities. Our experience has left an irrevocable mistrust of PCL and any future consultation should be carried out by Council Officers with experience of our communities and who are not seconded from third party organizations, avoiding the current conflict of interest with the PCL group of companies.
3. To publicly call out the racist narrative, that BAME people don't care about climate change, or are bad parents who don't care about their children's health.
4. Before any new consultation, an Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out with a particular focus on data on car ownership and usage by residents with protective characteristics.

We expect our elected representatives to stand with us, not against us. If they don't, then we will organise and replace them with representatives who will.

***Required**

Name *

Persons who live, work, study or use community facility in Whitechapel Ward, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Your answer

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