

# The Labour Party

## Head Office

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Labour Central, Kings Manor,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6PA  
0345 092 2299 | [labour.org.uk/contact](http://labour.org.uk/contact)

Councillor Jo Bird,



04 March 2019

REF: A674976

Dear Councillor Bird,

### **Notice of administrative suspension from holding office or representing the Labour Party (and from Wirral Labour Group)**


Allegations that you may have been involved in a breach of Labour Party rules have been brought to the attention of national officers of the Party. These allegations relate to comments you made in a meeting which may be in breach of rule 2.I.8 and the Party's Code of Conduct. It is important that these allegations are investigated and the NEC will be asked to authorise a full report to be drawn up with recommendations for disciplinary action if appropriate.

I write to give you formal notice that it has been determined that the powers given to the NEC under Chapter 6 Clause I.1.A of the Party's rules should be invoked to suspend you from office or representation of the party\*, pending the outcome of an internal Party investigation. This includes the power formally conferred by Chapter 6 Clause I.1.B of the rules to impose a suspension from membership of the Wirral Labour Group.

As a result you are not entitled to attend Labour Group meetings or to represent the Group in any capacity. You will however still be expected to retain your membership of the Labour Group and to abide by Group decisions as communicated to you.\*\*

In view of the urgency to protect the Party's reputation in the present situation the General Secretary has determined to use powers delegated to her under Chapter 1 Clause VIII.5 of the rules to impose this suspension forthwith, subject to the approval of the next meeting of the NEC. Because of the nature of the allegations received and concerns that your presence at branch meetings may be detrimental to the Party, while subject to this administrative suspension, you cannot attend any party meetings including your own branch meeting and Annual Conference and you cannot seek office within the Party or be considered for selection as a candidate to represent the Labour Party at an election at any level\*\*\*.

The General Secretary has appointed an Investigations Officer to arrange conduct of the Party's own investigation. You will be contacted in due course with questions pertaining to the investigation.

 is the email address that we will be corresponding with during the course of this investigation. If this email is incorrect please call 0345 092 2299 to update it.

The Labour Party's investigation process operates confidentially. That is vital to ensure fairness to you and the complainant, and to protect the rights of all concerned under the Data Protection Act 2018. I must therefore ask you to ensure that you keep all information and correspondence relating to this investigation private, and that do not share it with third parties or the media (including social media). That includes any information you receive from the Party identifying the name of the person who has made a complaint about you, any witnesses, the allegations against you, and the names of Party staff dealing with the matter. If you fail to do so, the Party reserves the right to take action to protect confidentiality, and you may be liable to disciplinary action for breach of the Party's rules. The Party will not share information about the case publicly unless, as a result of a breach of confidentiality, it becomes necessary to correct inaccurate reports. In that case we will only release the minimum information necessary to make the correction. **The Party may also disclose information in order to comply with its safeguarding obligations.**

The Party would like to make clear that there is support available to you while this matter is being investigated. There are a number of organisations available who can offer support for your wellbeing:

- You can contact your **GP** who can help you access support for your mental health and wellbeing.
- **The Samaritans** are available 24/7 – They offer a safe place for anyone to talk any time they like, in their own way – about whatever's getting to them. Telephone **116 123**.
- **Citizens Advice** - Provide free, confidential and impartial advice. Their goal is to help everyone find a way forward, whatever problem they face. People go to the Citizens Advice Bureau with all sorts of issues. They may have money, benefit, housing or employment problems. They may be facing a crisis, or just considering their options. <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- If you have questions about the investigation process please contact the Disputes Team, whose details will be included in this letter.
- If you have any questions regarding support available from the party please call the **Safeguarding Unit** on **0207 783 1134** Mon – Fri 9:30 – 4:30.

It is hoped you will offer your full co-operation to the Party in resolving this matter.

Yours sincerely,

**The Governance and Legal Unit**

The Labour Party

c.c. North West Labour Party  
Wirral Labour Group  
Birkenhead CLP

\*In relation to any alleged breach of the constitution, rules or standing orders of the party by an individual member or members of the party, the NEC may, pending the final outcome of any investigation and charges (if any), suspend that individual or individuals from office or representation of the party notwithstanding the fact that the individual concerned has been or may be eligible to be selected as a candidate in any election or by-election. (Disciplinary Rules, Chapter 6 Clause I.1.A)

\*\*Whilst the whip is withdrawn, attendance at group meetings is not permitted, nor is the holding of any group office or appointment nominated by the group. However, you are required to abide by the rules of the Labour Party and to comply with the whip of Wirral Labour Group, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you take the necessary steps to maintain contact with the Chief Whip to achieve this during the period of suspension.

\*\*\*A 'suspension' of a member whether by the NEC in pursuance of 1 above or by the NCC in imposing a disciplinary penalty, unless otherwise defined by that decision, shall require the membership rights of the individual member concerned to be confined to participation in their own branch meetings, unless the reason for the suspension in part or in full is their conduct in party meetings or there are concerns that their presence at branch meetings may be detrimental to the Party, and activities as an ordinary member only and in ballots of all individual members where applicable. A suspended member shall not be eligible to seek any office in the party, nor shall s/he be eligible for nomination to any panel of prospective candidates nor to represent the party in any position at any level. The member concerned will not be eligible to attend any CLP meeting other than to fulfil the requirement to participate in ballots. (Disciplinary rules, Chapter 6 Clause I.3)