

# The Labour Party

## Head Office

Southside, 105 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QT  
Labour Central, Kings Manor,  
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6PA  
0345 092 2299 | [labour.org.uk/contact](http://labour.org.uk/contact)

Cllr Jo Bird,



06 February 2020

Ref: A674976  
Case No: CN-4453

Dear Ms Bird,

### **Notice of administrative suspension from membership of the Labour Party**

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 your conduct on social media which may be in breach of rule 2.I.8.

We write to give you formal notice that it has been determined that the powers given to the NEC under Chapter 6 Clause I.1.B\* should be invoked to administratively suspend your membership of the Party.

This means that you cannot attend any Party meetings, including meetings of your own branch, constituency, or annual conference; and you cannot be considered for selection as a candidate to represent the Labour Party at an election at any level\*\*.

In view of the urgency to protect the Party's reputation 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.

It has also been determined that this case may be suitable for the use of NEC disciplinary powers under Chapter 1 Clause VIII.3.A.iii\*\*\* and Chapter 6 Clause I.1.B\* because it involves an incident which may reasonably be seen to demonstrate hostility or prejudice based on race, religion or belief.

This means that, upon the conclusion of this investigation, the NEC may impose such disciplinary measures as it sees fit. These measures include suspension from membership of the Party or from holding office in the Party; withholding or withdrawing endorsement as a candidate; and expulsion from membership of the Party.

Attached to this letter is the draft charge(s), the evidence pertinent to the case, and a series of questions which require your response. Your response should also include your written representations and any evidence you intend to rely on in your defence.

**Please respond in writing to the London address at the top of this letter or by email to [disputes@labour.org.uk](mailto:disputes@labour.org.uk) quoting case number CN-4453 within 7 days of the date at the top of this letter.**

The Party may consider an extension to this deadline if you are able to provide a clear and compelling reason to do so. The Party will also take reasonable steps to ensure that you have been given an opportunity to respond to these allegations. However, if you do not respond, the NEC is entitled to consider your case without a response.

**You should take this letter and your response seriously. Possible outcomes of the NEC disciplinary process could include your expulsion or suspension from the Labour Party.**

██████████ 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. We 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 are included in this letter.

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

\* In relation to any alleged breach of Chapter 2 Clause I.8 above by an individual member or members of the Party which involves any incident which in the NEC's 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, 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 byelection. The General Secretary or other national officer shall investigate and report to the NEC on such investigation. Upon such report being submitted, the NEC or a sub-panel of Disputes Panel may exercise its powers under Chapter 1 Clause VIII.3.A.iii (Chapter 6 Clause I.1.B as amended by Annual Conference 2019)

\*\* A 'suspension' of a member whether an administrative suspension by the NEC or by the NEC or 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 such ballots of all individual members as may be prescribed by the NEC. 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 Party meeting. (Chapter 6 Clause I.3 as amended by Annual Conference 2019)

\*\*\* where a determination has been made as a result of a case brought under disciplinary proceedings concluded at NEC stage under Chapter 6 Clause I.1.B below of these rules, to impose such disciplinary measures as it thinks fit including: formal warning; reprimand; suspensions from membership of the Party, or from holding office in the Party (including being a candidate or prospective candidate at any, or any specified, level) or being a delegate to any Party body, for a specified period or until the happening a specified event; withholding or withdrawing endorsement as a candidate or prospective candidate at any, or any specified, level (such disciplinary power shall be without prejudice to and shall not in any way affect the NEC's other powers to withhold endorsement under these rules); expulsion from membership of the Party, in which case the NEC may direct that following expiration of a specified period of not less than two nor more than five years, the person concerned may seek readmission to the Party on that basis that Chapter 6.I.2 is not to apply to that readmission; or any other reasonable and proportionate measure. (Chapter 1 Clause VIII.3.A.iii as amended by Annual Conference 2019)

**Please respond to this letter within 7 days of the date on page 1 quoting case number CN-4453.  
Your response should include:**

- A written statement of representation in your defence to the draft charge(s) below.
- Any evidence you wish to submit in your defence to the draft charge(s) below.
- A written response to the questions contained overleaf.

**Your response should be submitted in writing to the Disputes Team by email or by post:**

**Email:**

[disputes@labour.org.uk](mailto:disputes@labour.org.uk)

**Post:**

Disputes Team  
The Labour Party  
Southside,  
105 Victoria Street,  
London SW1E 6QT

**Draft Charge**

1. Jo Bird (the Respondent) has engaged in conduct prejudicial and / or grossly detrimental to the Party in breach of Chapter 2 Clause 1.8 of the Labour Party Rule Book 2019 by engaging in conduct online which:
  - a. may reasonably be seen to demonstrate hostility or prejudice based on race, religion or belief; and / or
  - b. may reasonably be seen to involve antisemitic actions, stereotypes and sentiments; and / or
  - c. undermines the Party's ability to campaign against racism.
2. By any and all of the following pieces of evidence:
  - a) Item 1 – Made the following statements in a video online *"what's damaging is when there's accusations and witch-huntery and people making allegations without evidence"*, defending a *"Jew process" 'joke'*, and claiming that *"thousands of people in the Labour Party and outside the Labour Party rose up and said it was ridiculous for me as a Jewish person to be suspended."*
  - b) Item 2 – Endorsed the statement *"Long over Jew"* online, having previously received a Formal Warning for similar conduct.
  - c) Item 3 – Endorsed a comment that appears to be designed to encourage of harassment of Jewish Chronicle journalist, Lee Harpin.
  - d) Item 4 – Endorsing a statement online that claims the Chief Rabbi is attacking Corbyn because *"he is a capitalist and a supporter of Israel."*

## Questions

- 1) Please see the evidence attached overleaf. The Party has reason to believe that this is your Facebook account. Can you confirm this is the case?
- 2) The Party further has reason to believe that you posted or shared these statements yourself. Can you confirm this is the case? If not, each individual piece of evidence is numbered so please specify which of the pieces of evidence you are disputing posting or sharing?
- 3) Please explain your reasons for making this video, shared on twitter (*Item 1*)?
- 4) Please explain what you meant by the statement "what's damaging is when there's accusations and witch-huntery and people making allegations without evidence" made in this video?
- 5) Please explain why you 'liked' a comment in which the phone number of Jewish Chronicle journalist Lee Harpin was posted, which may reasonably be considered to encourage contact and/or harassment of that individual (*Items 3 a and b*)?
- 6) Please explain what you meant by the statement "he is a capitalist and a supporter of Israel." Used in Item 4?
- 7) Rule 2.1.8 in the Party's rulebook 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 and NCC 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. The disclosure of confidential information relating to the Party or to any other member, unless the disclosure is duly authorised or made pursuant to a legal obligation, shall also be considered conduct prejudicial to the Party."*

What is your response to the allegation that your conduct may be or have been in breach of this rule?

- 8) The Party's Code of Conduct states that members should *"treat all people with dignity and respect. This applies offline and online"* do you think the posts in this pack are consistent with this policy?
- 9) Looking back at the evidence supplied with this letter, do you regret posting or sharing any of this content?
- 10) Do you intend to post or share content of this nature again in the future?
- 11) Are there any further matters you wish to raise in your defence?

12) Is there any evidence you wish to submit in your defence?



Item 1

<https://twitter.com/JustJewsUK/status/1168467580409077760?s=20>



11:15 am · 2 Sep 2019 · TweetDeck



Item 2 a)



Jo Bird

June 26, 2019 · 🌐



Good news



POLITICSHOME.COM

**EXCL Chris Williamson is allowed back into Labour party after suspension over anti-semitism rows**

👍❤️ 61

11 Comments 3 Shares

👍 Like      💬 Comment      ➦ Share



**Ruth Molyneux** Brilliant news

Like · Reply · 31w



1



**Tony Shephard** That's fantastic to hear.

Like · Reply · 31w



1



**Emma Bird** Great news!! 😊

Like · Reply · 31w



2



**Dave Kaye** And rightly so 😊

Like · Reply · 31w



2



**Paul Gosling** That could get you expelled.

Like · Reply · 31w



2



**Sue Mahoney** Fabulous news

Like · Reply · 31w



1



**Phil Jones** Great to have him back.

Like · Reply · 31w



2



**Patrick Terry Ogorman** he only told truth but are right wing think nobody tells truth -----jeremy corbynpm

Like · Reply · 31w



1



**Helen Dickson** Only as it should be.

Like · Reply · 31w



1



**Gary McClean** Long over Jew

Like · Reply · 31w



2



**Pauline Stewart** Brilliant

Like · Reply · 31w



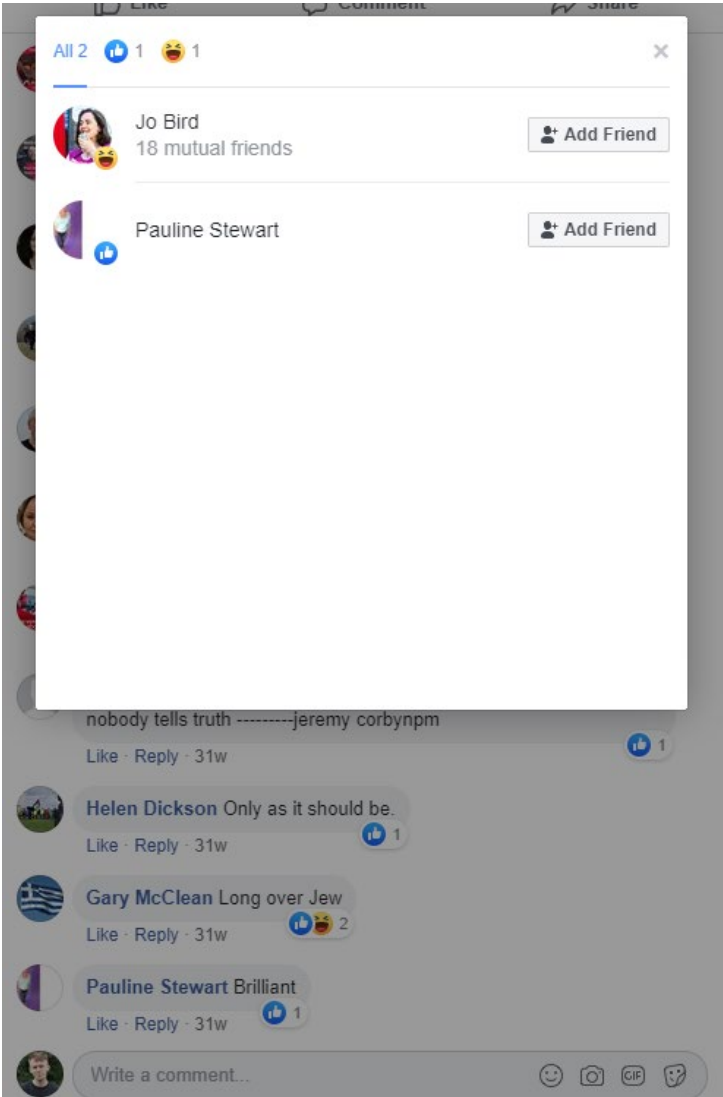
1



Item 2 (b)



Item 2 (c)



**Item 3 (a)**



**Jo Bird**

November 13, 2019 · 🌐

Michael Rosen has a lovely way of putting actual antisemitism in context.



**Michael Rosen**

November 12, 2019

Take this step by step folks.  
 In 2006 the editor of the Jewish Chronicle, Stephen Pollard, announced that there was a 'battle to save Western civilisation' and the 'enemy' was 'the Left in any form'.  
 In 2012, Pollard was 'delighted to host' an evening meeting with Nigel Farage.  
 In 2015, Pollard wrote a fiercely condemnatory article for the Daily Express about Margaret Hodge, deemed at the time to be a bit of a lefty for some quite punchy appearances as chair of the audit commission.  
 At around this time, one of the journalists on Pollard's paper, Alex Brummer [CORRECTION: Geoffrey Levy] wrote the famous article in the Mail which attacked Ed Miliband's father for being a Jewish marxist traitor. [NB Correction 2 - it was Alex Brummer who defended Levy's article a week later in the same paper]  
 Pollard announced that Miliband was 'toxic' for Jewish voters and a good deal of publicity went into claiming (perhaps correctly) that Jewish voters had stopped voting Labour, Miliband's views on Israel being cited as the reason.  
 All this was before Corbyn was elected leader.  
 Once Corbyn was elected, the 'Corbyn is an antisemite' narrative kicked in backed up by ideas that the Labour Party was itself totally and institutionally anisemitic - a narrative written up weekly by Pollard and his Political Editor, Lee Harpin in the Chronicle.  
 At times, I've argued with Harpin on twitter with the consequence that a few weeks ago he accused me of being a 'cheerleader for Soros'. I need hardly say that I am not a cheerleader for Soros though I have noted that Soros is used as a kind of cipher for the Nazi trope that Europe was being brought to its knees by international Jewish finance.  
 The rise of Trump, Bannon, Farage, Johnson, Orban and others represent the rise of what Bannon called 'economic nationalism'.  
 Farage has never been afraid to use classic antisemitic slurs in his radio interviews talking antagonistically about Soros, and the power of the Jewish lobby in the US etc etc. The Guardian and the Independent have highlighted these.  
 Now, just recently a guy called Yosef David has announced that he is going to stand for the Brexit Party (yes!) against Corbyn in his constituency of Islington North. David is Jewish. He is being given a lot of well-wishes by people who talk as if he has the hopes of the 'Jewish community' on his side.  
 Straightaway, Lee Harpin, scourge of Labour antisemitism has wished him 'Mazel Tov' (congratulations) on Twitter.  
 Think about that.  
 Lee Harpin, who has done all he can to expose what he sees as antisemitism in the Labour Party is congratulating someone who is supporting a leader who has come out with obvious and blatant antisemitic slurs.  
 David presumably thinks he's fighting antisemitism by supporting an antisemite. It all rather does look as if these folks were never really interested in fighting antisemitism. They were either only interested in fighting antisemitism in the Labour Party or perhaps just 'fighting the Labour Party' - exactly as Pollard announced that he was going to do back in 2006.  
 Taking a longer wider view, what's going on here is an alignment of right wing forces which has the support of some Jews even if these right wing forces are happy to go in for classic antisemitic statements. This alignment sees Islam and the Left as 'the enemy' and will do battle with either or both in order to secure a new kind of nationalist capitalism - as they see it or call it (even if it's going to be as international as all capitalism is anyway).  
 What's been particularly sad and pathetic is seeing various kinds of liberal commentators eagerly gobbling up the faux fight against antisemitism, not realising that they are being taken for a ride by this new right talking antisemitism one day and claiming to fight it the next.

👍❤️ 39

3 Comments 8 Shares



Like



Comment



Share



**Leonie Murray** Spot on

Like · Reply · 11w



1



**Peter Johnson** Brilliant analysis

Like · Reply · 11w



1



**Jason Phillips** Lee Harpin is available to take calls. No one can get away with this. These guys have stopped people's democratic demands from being met, from the Wirral to Epping Forest.

His work number is 020 7415 1500.

Like · Reply · 10w · Edited



1

Item 3 (b)



A screenshot of a Facebook post by Jason Phillips. The post text reads: "Lee Harpin is available to take calls. No one can get away with this. These guys have stopped people's democratic demands from being met, from the Wirral to Epping Forest. His work number is 020 7415 1500." The post has one like from a user named Jo Bird. The interaction bar shows "Like · Reply · 10w · Edited".

Item 4



A screenshot of a Facebook post by David Kerr. The post text reads: "The chief rabbi is attacking Corbyn, not because he is Jewish, but because he is a capitalist, and a supporter of Labour." The post has 11 likes from a list of users including Paul Brooks, TJ Mallon, Tom Dunne, David Jones, Jo Bird, Lee Watts, James Hall, Stephen Dodd, Karen Johnson, and Pauline Y. Yau. The interaction bar shows "Like · Reply · 9w".