



12(a)

COUNCIL MEETING

24 SEPTEMBER 2015

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor M Henry will move the following motion:

“This Council notes that:

- In February 2015 the United Nations agency, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), reaffirmed its belief that ‘without protecting a right to strike, Freedom of Association, in particular the right to organise activities for the purpose of promoting and protecting workers’ interests, cannot be fully realised.
- In July 2015, the Conservative Government announced its intention to change legislation affecting trade unions and their members to make it harder to win ballots for industrial action. This will only be lawful if there is a 50% turnout among trade union members entitled to vote in addition to a simple majority voting for industrial action.
- The Trade Union Bill currently before Parliament also seeks to introduce greater restrictions on picketing and the use of social media in relation to industrial action.
- The Conservative Government wants to remove the ban for employers to employ agency workers during a period of lawful industrial action.
- The Government wants to grant ministers the power to reduce the amount of facilities time agreed by employers and the workforce, which is in place to ensure adequate workplace representation.

This Council believes that:

- The right to strike and protest are fundamental rights, which should be respected in a free and democratic society.
- The Conservative Government’s Bill will undermine constructive employment relations and that harmonious industrial relations are achieved by meaningful engagement and not additional legal restrictions to trade union members.
- Workplace representation ensures access to justice and has benefits across whole organisations.
- The Government’s Trade Union Bill is part of a disturbing trend to erode civil liberties and inhibit the right to speak out or protest against the Government.
- The Conservative Government’s Trade Union Bill is a politically-motivated attack on trade unions and could have negative consequences for wider civil society.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, stating the Council’s opposition to their Trade Union Bill and to participate in any consultations.

- Support the Northern TUC and civil liberties groups in campaigning to defend the right to strike and oppose the Trade Union Bill.
- Continue to value the importance of meaningful workforce engagement and representation.”

Proposed: Councillor M Henry

Seconded by: Councillor M Foy

Supported by: Councillor P Foy
Councillor P Mole
Councillor P McNally