

Notice of Motion: Theresa May and the Democratic Unionist Party

Councillor Rodwell has submitted the following motion:

“Barking and Dagenham Council is appalled by Prime Minister Theresa May’s decision to do a deal with Northern Ireland’s Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in order to prop up her minority Tory government.

Like other communities up and down the country, we have a long list of needs – for more homes, better health facilities, increased funding for schools, road improvements and investment in key infrastructure projects like the A13 riverside tunnel, which will help to unite our local community and ease air pollution.

However, this Council notes that despite the Tory commitment to austerity that has slashed £135m from our budget since 2010, the Prime Minister has managed to find £1bn of funding for Northern Ireland as part of her sweetheart deal with the DUP. This Council believes that austerity should end throughout the UK, and not just in Northern Ireland, so that the crippling cut backs this authority has been forced to make can be reversed and we can invest in our community once more.

This Council is also alarmed by the extreme views held by the DUP on issues such as abortion, LGBT rights and climate change, as well as the party’s historical links to loyalist paramilitary organisations. Equality and cohesion is something that we care passionately about in Barking and Dagenham and the values of the DUP run contrary to this Council’s desire, set out in our ground-breaking Gender Equality Charter, to “build a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other’s differences.”

This Council believes that the Tory government’s reliance on a party that sits on the hard-right fringe of British politics can only be bad news for our borough. As the Prime Minister’s attention is turned towards stabilising her weak government by pandering to political extremists, it is clear that local residents will continue to lose out while issues such the desperate need to build more genuinely affordable homes and the crisis in social care remain unaddressed.

Barking and Dagenham has a long history of challenging political extremists. This Council resolves to continue that proud tradition by condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the views of the DUP and Theresa May’s decision to enter into an agreement with them.”