

Motion: Increases to the minimum wage

Proposed by Graham Henson

Seconded by Dan Anderson

This council notes:

- Since its introduction by Tony Blair's government in 1999, the minimum wage has driven up the pay of thousands of Harrow's lowest earners by £6,000 a year; ~~making it the single most successful economic policy in a generation, according to a study published by the Resolution Foundation.~~
- Harrow Council is a fully accredited London Living Wage employer having paid the London Living Wage hourly rate to its lowest paid employees since 2013, which has improved the Council's recruitment and retention of staff.
- The Resolution Foundation said analysis of the UK showed that between 1980 and 1998, hourly pay growth in the UK was twice as fast for the highest earners as it was for the lowest earners – 3.1% versus 1.4% a year. "But since 1999 this trend has reversed, and hourly pay inequality has fallen with pay growth for the lowest earners five times that seen by the highest earners – 1.6% versus 0.3 per cent per year," it said. Therefore, ~~because of Labour's introduction of the minimum wage,~~ thousands of families in Harrow have seen their standards of living improving.
- The Conservative government introduced the National Living Wage in April 2016.
- Successive rises by the coalition and Conservative governments mean a full-time worker is over £9,000 better off than they would have been in 2010.
- Since April 2024, the UK's minimum wage has been £11.44 for those aged over 21. But it is lower for younger workers: for example, those aged under 18 are only guaranteed £6.40 per hour.

The Council believes:

- Regular increases to the minimum wage made by successive governments since its inception in 1999 shows that ~~the it is not only a successful policy that~~ enjoys cross-party support, ~~but is the single most successful economic policy in a generation for the people of Harrow.~~
- Increases to the minimum wage means that more people have more disposable income to spend which boosts the economy and increases growth, as well as the living standards of individuals who benefit from the rise.
- Given the increased pressures of the current cost-of-living crisis, more needs to be done to support those on the lower end of the pay scale in Harrow and an increase in minimum wage is a good means of doing this while incentivising people to get into work.
- That a balance needs to be struck so that employers are able to afford any increases, especially when they are facing increased National Insurance contributions and the threshold for National Insurance being lowered, significantly increasing employers wage bill.

The Council resolves to:

- Support ~~thi~~se Labour government's continuing the policy of the previous government to increase of the minimum wage ~~to £12.21 an hour~~ to help tackle the cost of living in Harrow and ensure that living standards improve ~~rather than stagnate as they have done since 2008~~.
- ~~Commend Chancellor Rachel Reeve's~~ Acknowledge the decision to uprate the minimum wage for 18–21-year-olds to £10 per hour.
- ~~Harrow Council to e~~Commend the Labour past and present Ggovernmentss for standing up for low wage workers.
- ~~Ask T~~ the Leader of the Council, Leader of the Opposition and Managing Director ~~to collectively and individually to~~ stand up for our low wage workers in Harrow and argue for further local funding to support them through the cost-of-living crisis.

Proposed by Cllr Paul Osborn

Seconded by Cllr Marilyn Ashton