

Westminster North Labour Party



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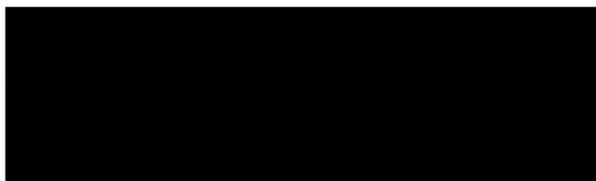
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

2019 Accounts - Westminster North Labour Party

I enclose the closing accounts for Westminster North Constituency Labour Party: they are as approved by the constituency Executive Committee and an all members meeting convened to review the accounts.

If you have follow up questions or additional information requirements in respect of these accounts, these should be directed to me, at the above address, in the first instance.

Yours faithfully,



Andy Whitley
CLP Treasurer

Copied to: Compliance Unit, the Labour Party

Statement of Accounts = Treasurer's Report

After a strong 2017 and 2018 returning both our hard-working Member of Parliament, Karen Buck (in 2017) and 16 of the 30 Councillor vacancies (in 2018) for Labour, our best result since 1986, we had a great platform to begin to work solidly over the year which would then culminate in an early start to return our Labour Mayor for a further 4 year term. It was not to be quite in this way.

Post 2017 General Election we had a weak Government and many significant pressures on the lives of ordinary people across all ages. To the exclusion of all else Parliament was becoming a policy vacuum whilst the task of Brexit was being bitterly evolved at huge taxpayer expense. This coupled with a Tory Council who genuinely appear to believe that the next generation of Westminster residents will only be entitled to remain here if they have significant resources to do so, demonstrates the pressures on elected members in this area.

So we continued to campaign on matters important to our communities across Westminster North, pressuring to deliver a kinder, fairer Westminster that invested inclusively for the future. This is against the backdrop of closures in facilities for young people, policing cuts, housing shortages, poor air quality and pressures like never before on the NHS. As ever, our tirelessly hard-working Member of Parliament, Karen Buck M.P. led almost every event across her constituency and was the lifeblood of every campaign we fought.

We were faced unexpectedly with holding European Elections in the late spring which were very challenging for Labour (though in turn, even more challenging for the Conservatives).

Dario Goodwin joined as Constituency Organiser in October 2019. Within days of him joining it became obvious that we were heading towards a General Election. We had spent most of 2019 doing low key campaigning on local issues, awareness raising through newsletters, developing our e-presence and social media and combining these with regular surgeries and on-going canvassing activity across the constituency. In the end this positioned us well for the General Election, despite working with a woefully out of date electoral register and canvassing with torches to read the register in dark and often wet of the winter evenings. We've truly never experienced anything like it.

Despite pretty poor weather on polling day, morale was good and we hit polling day with whatever resilience our members could muster and delivered a positive result in the direst of circumstances. Sadly this wasn't replicated outside London and the party was inflicted a heavy defeat at the polls.

We must now turn to our Mayoral Campaign with vigour to ensure that despite a Tory Government and Tory Council both promoting policies that are often devastating for our communities, we have a Labour Mayor to make inroads into some regional issues such as housing, policing and the environment, where much work has begun and resource invested despite the draconian circumstances of the national and local cuts over the past 10 years and the inertia of London Government in the 8 years prior to the election of Mayor Khan.

We also have the upcoming review of wards in the City of Westminster but we are not hopeful of the boundary commission taking a stance against the continuous but flawed arguments for "minimal change". Such an approach is ridiculous when existing wards are so deeply unequal in both resident and elector populations but also for a number of our wards, the current boundaries bind communities together that have little affiliation with each other. There remain too many electors who live a short walk from a polling place that they cannot vote in. We will continue to make strong representations to end these impediments to democracy, but we are not hopeful given our feedback to date. When the total number of votes cast for the two main parties in the 2018 local elections was so close, it cannot be right that representation is skewed so badly to the sole benefit of the Conservatives. The current warding arrangements are designed to do nothing other than keep the current administration in place.

Domestically, our membership remained buoyant at 978 as at 31st December 2019. Young members continue to comprise around 15% of our membership which is excellent despite the difficulties for

young people who wish to live centrally in London. This is down on our peak of over 1,100 members in 2016 but well over double the membership of 2014. We have lost further committed campaigners in the year but with an upturn in membership since the 2019 general election, we hope new and enthusiastic campaigners will be joining us to take on the challenges ahead.

To deliver sound governance within our organisation, the Executive Committee met frequently during the year to direct the affairs of the Constituency Party, reporting regularly to the All Member Meetings that are generally held with guest speakers and always with stimulating debate.

The officers at the end of 2019 were as follows:

Max Sullivan – Chair
Connor Jones - Secretary
Andy Whitley – Treasurer

There is always a lot of work to do ensuring that new arrivals and movers in the area remember to get themselves onto the electoral register and this was again a focus in 2019. EU electors make up a significant proportion of our electorate and are engaged in a new way since the Brexit vote in 2016. They rightly feel that their significant contributions over the years have been largely ignored in the debate but are not always clear that they are able to participate in most elections. Voter turnover has, as ever, created an instability in our elector registration and again in 2019 and going forward, supporting registration drives across the constituency remains a key priority.

Beyond the Brexit mess, housing pressures continue to dominate both our mailbag and our conversations on the doorstep. This problem will take years to turn around but our Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan is forging ahead with new starts on site of genuinely affordable housing that give us the green shoots of hope after the previous 8 years of dire Tory Mayoral Housing policy which saw luxury development balloon up into the skyline across London whilst homelessness surged.

Community safety and stretched police resource, alongside the Tory decimation of services for young people and the strains on NHS are also regular issues we campaign on. There continues to be discontent and occasionally puzzlement with the Council's almost "random" approach to planning and development that practically never delivers new homes for established communities and provides opportunities largely for developers and investors. Instead of making huge savings on temporary accommodation and housing benefit costs, our Council presses on with a stubborn reluctance to use public land for public gain rather than private profit. We believe this approach to be driven by dogma and not sound economics and we oppose it vigorously.

Our roads are also becoming increasingly congested and in poor condition with potholes and poor paving and lighting. There are days in our constituency when the air feels truly toxic and this requires urgent action not inertia.

Meanwhile our valiant M.P., Karen Buck, was again safely elected back to Parliament. Together with her team she continues to tackle depressing levels of casework with zeal. The future of this constituency remains in doubt as constituency boundary reviews continue to work towards a new configuration of parliamentary seats. With the 2019 snap General Election however it looks like further delays in this never-ending process are inevitable. We also continue to feel it is about time that the age of majority should be consistent with other laws that an age of majority at 16 or 17. We would welcome an informed debate on this issue. Young people are often very enfranchised and are not clear on why they shouldn't be able to vote. They (and most adults) are also baffled as to why parliamentary constituencies are created on the basis of registered electors and not resident population, which significantly disadvantages inner city constituencies.

We will continue to campaign against injustices and for key policies that reflect our values. Our elected members have a job to do and are getting on with it marvellously and the local Party Members and Officers continue to support this activity well beyond the call of a conventional voluntary role. We look forward to 2020.

2019 Accounts

The attached accounts have been prepared on an **accruals** basis and prior year comparatives are shown. Expenditure includes all relevant VAT payments gross. *Notes to the accounts below, give further detail on the individual account headings used.*

The details of all donations required to be individually reported have been submitted to The Labour Party for onward reporting to the Electoral Commission. The Constituency Party (CLP) has not received or made any loans in 2019 in any form whatsoever.

These accounts do not reflect any capitalised expenditure or depreciation during the year. The only item classified as a fixed asset is the freehold of our business premises. Although the CLP does not depreciate its building, a specific cash-backed reserves allocation is made in respect of the upkeep of the premises, on a 'sinking fund' basis. Yet again this year, this sinking fund was used extensively in and a limited amount of further work remains to be done in the coming year.

Income

Membership has stayed steady overall, keeping party fees only a little down year on year. General donations increased significantly year on year as is always triggered by a General Election. We are deeply grateful – most notably to the many, many longstanding members who reliably support us at election time with donations large and small.

The Labour Group on Westminster Council made further contributions to support our local campaigning alongside our interactions online and on social media. Some of that work was commissioned by the Group via our CLP on behalf of a Westminster wide campaign, resulting in a rechargeable service income which also shows in the accounts (though at a lower rate than in 2018).

Being a year of consolidation (and without the foresight of a snap General Election) our fundraising activity was low key in 2019 and significantly down on 2018. We hope to raise more in 2020.

Premises income was largely stable in 2019. Rent reviews are due in 2020.

Expenditure

After the huge amount of activity in 2018, 2019 was planned as a year of consolidation. This shows clearly in our accounts but would have been even more contrasting with the prior year if the snap General Election had not occurred.

We also continue to invest in our digital strategy and the pace of change will require this to be an on-going investment commitment.

We appointed a new Organiser in October 2019 who will remain in post for the Mayoral Campaign in 2020. Dario has made himself very much the heart of our campaigning and we are hugely grateful. stalwart members Margaret Lynch and Francis Prideaux continue to lead very much from the front on our continuous campaigning activity and the whole constituency owes them a very generous gratitude for all they do.

Premises costs continue to be challenging – business rates, utilities, insurances. We stand shoulder to shoulder with local small businesses each of which are fed up of the outdated business rating system and the massive overhead burden this creates. There is no real sign that the Tory Government has a plan to deal with this however which is extremely disappointing.

Balance Sheet

The small loss in the year was an added pressure to a worsening working capital position (mainly due to debtor timing issues) though a proportion of our 2019 expenditure was funded by sinking funds. Our balance sheet overall remains in reasonable health and the Executive Committee closely monitors our immediate and forecast financial health.

Year-end creditors remain high but again a significant proportion of this is timing related around an arrangement with Labour HQ.

Additional Notes to the Accounts – 2019 (Accruals basis)

1. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards with additional guidance issued by the Electoral Commission.

2. Accounting convention

The statements are prepared on a historical cost basis.

3. Change in basis

There have not been any material changes to the statements of accounts since last year's return.

4. Related party transactions

There are no transactions, cash or notional, within these accounts, which involve a transfer of funds for goods or services, from the Party to a member of the Executive or General Committees.

5. Fixed Assets

As in previous years, the sole asset reflected in the balance sheet relates to the historic cost of purchase of 4G, Shirland Mews, W9. No additions, revaluation or amortisation of fixed assets took place during the year. IT and other equipment held by the Party at the end of the year had no material realisable value.

6. Debtors and prepayments

The split at 31 December 2019 was as follows:

Debtors: £4,349

Prepayments: £2,575

The higher than usual debtor last year related to the timing of the cash flow from the Westminster Labour Group in support of the constituency's work which was resolved in early 2020.

7. Creditors and accruals

The split at 31 December 2019 was as follows:

Invoiced creditors: £2,824

Salary accruals: £7,050

Accrual – legal fees (premises): £3,300

Other accruals: £1,242

8. Salaries

Salaries are shown separately in the income and expenditure statement. The total reflects national insurance and pensions contributions as appropriate. The prior year comparison figures reflect differing lengths of employment. There was no organiser between January and September 2019.

9. Notional expenditure and income

All income and expenditure reflected in these accounts relates to cash settlements either made or about to be so. There is no notional income or expenditure reflected as no free-of-charge 'benefit' was given or received in the year.

10. Guarantees or loans

The Party entered into no arrangements that involved either guarantees or loans and therefore these statements do not reflect any balances in either respect.

**WESTMINSTER NORTH CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY
2019 END OF YEAR POSITION - ACCRUALS BASIS**

BALANCE SHEET

December

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
ASSETS			
<i>Current Assets</i>			
Debtors & Prepayments	6,923.71	3,041.36	10,115.13
Cash	22,472.33	26,846.86	28,828.82
Total	29,396.04	29,888.22	38,943.95
Creditors - within 1 year	14,416.00	12,745.27	13,681.00
Net Current Assets	14,980.04	17,142.95	25,262.95
<i>Fixed Assets</i>			
Premises at Cost	148,000.00	148,000.00	148,000.00
Total	148,000.00	148,000.00	148,000.00
 TOTAL ASSETS	 162,980.04	 165,142.95	 173,262.95
 LONG-TERM LIABILITIES AND RESERVES			
<i>Reserves</i>			
Opening Balance (inherited balance on set-up)	156,347.17	156,347.17	156,347.17
Premises Works and Cyclical Reserve	6,072.15	7,630.15	7,869.10
Income & Expenditure Surplus/(Deficit) b/f	1,165.63	9,046.68	6,055.89
Income & Expenditure Surplus/(Deficit) - in year	-504.91	-7,881.05	2,990.79
Total	162,980.04	165,142.95	173,262.95
 TOTAL LIABILITIES & RESERVES	 162,980.04	 165,142.95	 173,262.95
	0.00	0.00	0.00

**WESTMINSTER NORTH CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY
SUMMARY ACCOUNTS - 2019 - ACCRUALS BASIS**

	2019		2018	
	Totals		Totals	
	£		£	
INCOME				
Bank Interest	52.82		18.53	185.05%
Donations (inc. Standing Orders)	16,221.00		6,301.01	157.43%
Donations (WCC Labour Group)	10,650.00		21,339.94	-50.09%
Fundraising Events	1,693.97		6,914.31	-75.50%
Party Subscriptions	2,045.66		2,169.60	-5.71%
Premises lettings & charges for services	20,377.84		30,136.61	-32.38%
	51,041.29		66,880.00	-23.68%
COSTS				
Direct Campaigning Costs and Room Hires	- 16,271.27	-	27,426.33	40.67%
Premises Costs: Rates/Insurances	- 15,274.75	-	14,696.18	-3.94%
Premises Costs: Utilities & Cleaning	- 2,738.91	-	2,633.62	-4.00%
Premises Costs: Sinking Fund Chg	- 3,600.00	-	4,200.00	14.29%
Services Costs: Telecomms & Postage	- 2,550.60	-	2,145.70	-18.87%
Services Costs: Equipt & Materials	- 4,104.37	-	5,871.54	30.10%
Staffing Costs	- 7,106.30	-	17,787.68	60.05%
	- 51,646.20	-	74,761.05	30.92%
Surplus/(deficit) for year	- 604.91	-	7,881.05	