
**SPECIAL MOTION NO. 2 – AUSTERITY IS ECONOMICALLY ILLITERATE,
CRUEL AND NO MORE THAN AN IDEOLOGICALLY CONSERVATIVE ATTEMPT
TO SHRINK THE STATE WHICH IS WHY IT MUST END**

Standing in the names of:

- (i) Councillor Andrew Jones
- (ii) Councillor Alexandra Sanderson

This Council calls on the Conservative government to immediately end austerity and not just talk of doing so.

The Council acknowledges that austerity was introduced in 2010 by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat government, not as part of good economic management, but to deliver that government's ideologically conservative agenda.

The Council notes that austerity is economically illiterate and counter-productive which is why in 2010 it had the immediate effect of killing economic growth, driving the UK into recession and curtailing UK debt payments. It further notes that this policy has been widely condemned internationally, exemplified in particular by a 2016 IMF report concluding that it did 'more harm than good'.

The Council notes the broad correlation between the areas of Great Britain hardest hit by austerity and the vote to leave the European Union during David Cameron's flawed EU Referendum.

The Council views with sadness the consequences of austerity to our society most recently reported by the United Nations which detailed how it has caused extreme poverty and damaged people's human rights.

The Council declares that it is a matter of shame for the Conservative / Liberal Democrat (2010-2015) and Conservative (2015-present) governments that the UN report was able to conclude:

"The UK is the world's fifth largest economy, it contains many areas of immense wealth, its capital is a leading centre of global finance, its entrepreneurs are innovative and agile, and despite the current political turmoil, it has a system of government that rightly remains the envy of much of the world. It thus seems patently unjust and contrary to British values that so many people are living in poverty. This is obvious to anyone who opens their eyes to see the immense growth in foodbanks and the queues waiting outside them, the people sleeping rough in the

streets, the growth of homelessness, the sense of deep despair that leads even the Government to appoint a Minister for suicide prevention and civil society to report in depth on unheard of levels of loneliness and isolation. And local authorities, especially in England, which perform vital roles in providing a real social safety net have been gutted by a series of government policies. Libraries have closed in record numbers, community and youth centers have been shrunk and underfunded, public spaces and buildings including parks and recreation centers have been sold off. While the labour and housing markets provide the crucial backdrop, the focus of this report is on the contribution made by social security and related policies.”

The Council recognises that since 2010 almost sixty pence out of every pound of government funding has been cut to this council's budget.

The Council applauds the fact that the borough's Labour councillors opposed austerity from its start at the beginning of this decade. It notes that Conservative councillors have consistently justified austerity and voted to support it.

The Council calls for all councillors to now oppose austerity and the government's flawed management of our economy and joins with other councils across the country in calling for fair funding for councils.