

Council: Tuesday, 2 November 2010

Opposition Policy Item: Councillor Claire Farrier

Impact of Con-Dem Cuts on Women

Council notes that, according to the Fawcett Society, women face a 'triple jeopardy' from the Con-Dem coalition cuts of slashed benefits, job cuts, and a reduction in core public services.

Council also notes that:

- Women make up 65% of the public sector workforce where mass job losses are expected, and that 40% of women in work are employed in the public sector
- Cuts to family benefits, like child benefit, tax credits, and housing benefit will impact on women disproportionately
- Women access public services such as the NHS more frequently and intensively than men, because of pregnancy, longer life expectancy and lower earnings (women are still paid on average 16.4% less per hour than men) – and that cuts to public services, social care and child care provision will also impact on women disproportionately

Council agrees with the Fawcett Society that the impact of the emergency budget cuts threatens a huge step back in women's equality, as women will increasingly be pushed back into the home to fill the looming care gap. Council also believes with £6bn out of the £8bn cuts coming from women this will have a knock-on detrimental effect on children, young people and the family.

Council notes that the day of this Full Council meeting is Equal Pay Day, and asks Cabinet to assess the specific impact on women in Barnet of any proposed cuts in the council's budget, alongside any other equality impact assessments it will be undertaking, and where an assessment reveals a risk of discrimination, asks Cabinet to report the action it will be taking to address those risks.