

The Labour Party

Head Office

Southside, 105 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QT

Labour Central, Kings Manor,

Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6PA

0345 092 2299 | labour.org.uk/contact

The Lord Bew
Review of Intimidation of Parliamentary Candidates
Committee on Standards in Public Life
GC:05
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

By email to: public@public-standards.gov.uk

Tuesday, 19 September 2017

RE: Intimidation of Parliamentary candidates

Dear Lord Bew

At a hearing of the Committee on Standards in Public Life you requested further information from all political parties regarding actions taken against members during the election campaign.

The Chairman of the Labour Party, Ian Lavery MP, has asked me to provide you with some further information about actions taken against members during the election campaign.

The Labour Party is responsible for enforcing its rule book and associated codes of conduct. Intimidation of Parliamentary candidates by a Labour Party member would be treated in the same way as intimidation of any member of the public – as behaviour which is deemed unacceptable by Party members and outwith the Party's rules. The Labour Party rule book places an expectation of comradely behaviour on all its members.

The Party has, in its Rule Book, rules governing the conduct of members towards other members (including candidates). It applies an expected standard of behaviour upon all members of the Party to ensure that they do not engage in the intimidation of candidates. Where a member does engage in conduct which is deemed to be prejudicial and/or grossly detrimental to the Party, there are a range of sanctions available from a formal warning through to an administrative suspension pending a full investigation and hearing of the Party's disciplinary body, the National Constitutional Committee. These are designed to protect members and candidates for the Party as well as the Party's own reputation. The Party is currently working on implementing a "one-stop-shop" for all complaints in the form of a new unit who will guarantee response times & SLAs as part of a new package of measures to improve complainant-care.

Although we do not have specific figures for acts of harassment against candidates during the local and general elections in 2017, I thought it might be useful to give you an overview of

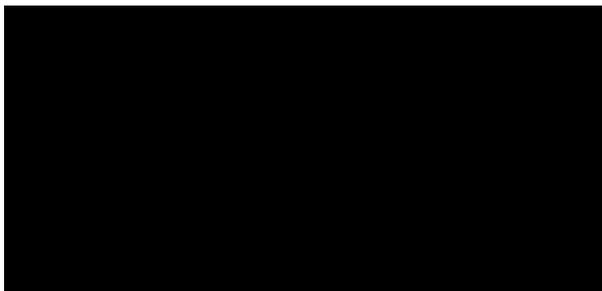
disciplinary action taken by the Labour Party against its own members for breaches of the Party's rulebook.

- 88 individuals have been excluded from membership of the Labour Party for rule breaches that make them automatically ineligible to be or remain members.
- 34 members have been administratively suspended from holding office or representing the Labour Party, pending full investigation and/or disciplinary hearings. Examples include allegations of offensive comments; graphic threats of violence against journalists; antisemitic comments or abuse; abuse of other Labour party members or politicians and abuse of politicians from rival political parties.
- Since the election, eight members have been referred to disciplinary hearings of the National Constitutional Committee. These largely consist of cases involving antisemitic comments or abuse, or prejudicial or abusive conduct toward of other members or politicians. However these allegations refer to incidents which occurred prior to the election.

The Labour Party has a zero tolerance policy on all forms of intimidation – particularly if they appear to be in any way motivated by prejudice. The rules are very clear that *“No member of the Party shall engage in conduct which in the opinion of the NEC is prejudicial, or in any act which in the opinion of the NEC is grossly detrimental to the Party”*.

I hope this information is useful in aiding your understanding of how seriously the Labour Party takes the issue of intimidation and harassment of others.

Yours sincerely



John Stolliday
Director of Governance and Legal Unit