

Greens-led Haringey Council backs KPMG auditors' demands for savage cuts

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Green Party-led Haringey Council in London has voted unanimously to enforce the recommendations of accounting giant KPMG for sweeping cuts to frontline services, including adult social care and housing. The vote was taken July 20 at a Full Council meeting at Tottenham Town Hall.

Despite £143 million gouged already from Haringey's central government grant since 2010—a cut of 55 percent in just 15 years—KPMG identified a “persistent failure to meet savings plans or financial targets”, concluding that “transformational savings must be identified and implemented”.

Green councillors joined with Labour and the Liberal Democrats to endorse these findings, identifying eight services for cuts, and pledging, “A Delivery Plan will be developed for each of these priority areas with the expected outcome of reducing spend and/or increasing income”.

Under council leader Mark Blake, the Greens are the largest party in Haringey since local elections on May 7. Labour suffered a wipeout, losing 29 seats and control of the borough for the first time in more than 50 years.

A “green surge” across England saw the party take control of Norwich City Council, alongside Waltham Forest, Hackney and Lewisham borough councils in London. In Lambeth, once a flagship council for the Labour Party, the Greens are the largest party, and (like Haringey) run a minority administration.

The Greens benefited from widespread hostility to the Starmer government and decades of austerity imposed by Labour-run authorities. After the implosion of Jeremy Corbyn's Your Party (which failed to stand its own slate of candidates), Green leader Zack Polanski's attacks on inequality, climate change and the Gaza genocide won support, especially among young people.

But the Greens are a capitalist party, and their first brush with power in Haringey has exposed their populist rhetoric as fraudulent. It has likewise shone light on the duplicitous role of Britain's pseudo-left groups, including the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Socialist Party and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), who, following the collapse of Your Party, shifted their support to the Greens, promoting them as an alternative to capitalist austerity and war.

Haringey's Socialist Alliance-Greens electoral alliance

In April, the Greens announced a “cooperation deal” with Haringey Socialist Alliance (HSA). A single Green candidate would stand in Northumberland Park, Bruce Castle and West Green wards, against HSA's two candidates, while the Green Party would be free to stand “a full slate across the rest of the borough”.

Celebrating their one-sided no-contest pact, the Greens declared, “Both parties have put mobilising opposition to cuts, improving housing repairs and stopping the sell-off of community spaces at the forefront of their campaigns.”

According to *Socialist Worker*, the SWP “worked with broader forces to set up the Haringey Socialist Alliance in anticipation of Jeremy Corbyn announcing a new left party.” It was registered in January 2026 and fronted by SWP members John Sinha, Alison Davy, Gary McFarlane and Paul Burnham.

Sinha told *Socialist Worker* on April 15, “There are three candidates in the ward I am standing in so you can vote for us and the Greens. We are not in competition.”

Highgate Wood: Greens oppose striking teachers

Almost immediately, the Greens' rhetoric about fighting cuts collided with the demands of striking teachers at Highgate Wood School. On May 7, more than 100 teachers and support staff began a series of strikes against cuts, including forced redundancies intended to clear the school's £1 million debt. Of the 75 council-run schools in the borough, more than 45 percent are in debt.

Teachers' demands were clear: No further increase in class sizes; No reduction in the curriculum, including the arts; No compulsory redundancies; No increased workload or contact time.

Equally clear was the response of Greens councillor Georgia Twigg, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, who rejected teachers' call for increased funding. She declared in June: “In terms of writing off deficit, Haringey council simply is not in a position to do this... rewriting policy to increase the repayment term is not financially viable or responsible for the council.”

Having promoted the Greens, Haringey Socialist Alliance (aka SWP) rushed forward to protect them from criticism, blocking any broader mobilisation of teachers and council workers in the borough. The SWP's John Sinha, HSA's candidate in West Green

ward, told an SWP event on July 4 that while the Greens-led council was opposing demands by striking teachers, “I’m not going to rush to denounce them right away—it’s still early days.”

The Socialist Party contributed to this political snow job. *The Socialist* ran the headline, “Greens lead Haringey, will they resist austerity?” Wherever the Greens have come to power—including majority control of Mid Suffolk Council and the Brighton electorate—they have enforced, not resisted, cuts. Across Europe, the Greens have joined coalition governments that impose austerity and support NATO rearmament and war.

Still, the Socialist Party insisted the Greens could be pressured to fight, declaring, “We are fighting for the trade union movement in the borough to pressure the Green councillors to use their full powers, to set a no-cuts budget”.

The RCP took a similar line. On June 25, its newspaper published a letter from a striking teacher at Highgate Wood, who noted, “Many of us feel that the Greens have fallen at the first hurdle. Some who campaigned for the Greens are bitterly angry.” The letter writer added, “For all of the Greens’ radical-sounding rhetoric, this is the cold reality of operating within the limits of capitalism.”

Yet the RCP offered no strategy to challenge the Greens. Instead, it promoted the election of Greens councillors in Lambeth, saying this was because “the Greens’ manifesto touched on all of the issues which have been bearing down on Lambeth residents for decades – and, most importantly, offered bold plans to fix them.” All of this served to politically disarm workers and block the necessary struggle against deep cuts which the Greens will inevitably seek to impose.

On July 9, Twigg announced on behalf of Haringey Council, “I’m delighted to see that strike action at Highgate Wood School has been called off [by the National Education Union] after good progress in negotiations.” A “background note” explained, “Haringey Council is financing the school deficit whilst supporting a financial recovery plan, with the aim to return to a balanced budget or surplus within three years.” It concluded, “The school leadership has now agreed to develop a new business plan,” with any extension of debt repayment contingent on the council’s approval of that plan. It is a recipe for ongoing cuts.

KPMG diktats: Greens surrender

The clash at Highgate Wood was a dress rehearsal for KPMG’s diktats, amounting to a savage war on Haringey residents, above all the poor.

Just 11 days after the Greens were elected in Haringey, a letter marked “private and confidential” from KPMG arrived on their desk. It set out the findings of its external audit of council finances and made statutory recommendations under the Local Audit and Accountability Act (2014) demanding sweeping cuts.

KPMG’s 15-page letter issued a Section 7 statutory recommendation, stating, “The overall financial health of the Council has deteriorated to the point where it is no longer able to

set a balanced budget without relying upon significant amounts of EFS [Exceptional Financial Support]” and “The Council has not demonstrated an ability to successfully deliver relatively modest savings programmes, nor has it committed to and subsequently implemented large-scale transformational efficiency savings.”

KPMG warned that the council’s reliance on EFS funding to cover its spending shortfall—£84 million in the current financial year—was saddling it with greater long-term debt. For every £1 million borrowed, the council would need to pay £62,000 in interest payments and charges.

Finally, KPMG’s audit included a series of non-statutory “enabling” recommendations noting the council’s failure to implement “cross-cutting initiatives” identified in 2025/26, and concluding, “The Council should demonstrate a commitment from the Cabinet and officers to increase the level of savings being delivered and to make the process of both identification and monitoring of savings more robust.”

The Greens prostrated themselves before KPMG. On July 20, Haringey council unanimously adopted KPMG’s recommendations in full. They pledged to create a three-year “Financial Resilience Plan” focused on “key priority service areas” (including housing and adult social care) “where spending is high” and where “there is the greatest opportunity” to deliver “savings through cost reductions or increased income”.

Greens council leader Mark Blake, a Labour councillor from 2014-23 until he resigned over the Gaza genocide, launched a PR campaign to justify his council’s actions. He told *Haringey Community Press* the new council was facing a “great shadow of an increasing debt burden”, a situation he described as “unfair” and “incredibly punitive”. Nonetheless, “We’ve got to get on with the facts.”

Blake concluded, “We don’t see a way out... We’re not looking for a bailout, we’re looking for a dialogue with the government.” The Greens see “no way out” (from enforcing cuts) because they are a capitalist party which accepts the “right” of the financial oligarchy to rule over society. Blake seeks “dialogue” with a Labour government under Andy Burnham that has made clear its central commitment to ramp up defence spending through a war on welfare and government spending.

All cuts must be rejected. There is no solution to austerity outside of breaking the grip of the financial oligarchy and placing the major banks, financial institutions and industries under the democratic control of the working class, a fight that can and must be waged in common with workers across Europe and internationally. The Socialist Equality Party urges all workers and youth who want to join this fight to contact us today.



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