

**Motion to:** Council

24 September 2024

**Subject:** Get me home safely

**Proposer:** Councillor Davis

**Seconder:** Councillor Catt

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This Council notes:

- 1) The campaign, initiated by Unite the Union known as 'Get me home safely', with the aim to ensure safe home transport is widely available for workers who work late and unsocial hours, workers who struggle to access and afford for transport at off-peak periods.
- 2) The campaign's call on employers to take all reasonable steps to ensure workers are able to get home safely from work at night in line with the Government's ratification of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (C190).
- 3) Shift work is widespread in many industries, particularly hospitality, as well as health and social care, retail, cleaning, security and portering and can often entail late-night working.
- 4) The hospitality sector, which largely employs women and BAEM workers, is a hot bed for sexual harassment with workers and customers falling victim to sexual predators. Unite the Union research has found that 68% of women working in the sector are habitually witnessing and experience sexual violence and harassment. We are also aware of rising incidents of spiking in bars and clubs.
- 5) Many workers, especially women, Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority (BAEM), LGBT+ and disabled workers are increasingly worried about their safety travelling to and from work at night.
- 6) Only 2% of victims report sexual harassment on public transport.

This Council believes that:

- 1) While employers may feel their duty of care to staff ends when an employee finishes a shift, they also need to take into consideration journeys home, especially during unsocial hours.

- 2) The weakness of enforcement of the law against sexual assault, including upskirting, on public transport is appalling.
- 3) Greater numbers of trained staff and stronger enforcement of the law against sexual assault and harassment on public transport are urgently needed.
- 4) Such a move would significantly benefit the safety and wellbeing of hospitality workers, particularly women, who often cannot afford, or access, safe transport options late at night and will also benefit our community.
- 5) Unite the Union's Get Me Home Safely campaign, which calls on employers to take all reasonable steps to ensure workers are able to get home safely from work at night, is greatly needed and should be supported.
- 6) Transport operators should take proactive steps to address gender based violence (GBV) on public transport and this should include; compulsory training for transport workers on GBV which includes practical guidance on reporting sexual harassment on public transport; work collectively with the council and Unite to lobby for stronger enforcement of the law against sexual assault and harassment; ensure there is clear and operational CCTV on all forms of public transport and lead by example by introducing safe home policies for transport workers.

This Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 1) Fully support Unite's "Get me Home Safely" campaign.
- 2) Use its powers (where and when possible) – as others have done – to allow our Licensing Committee to include additional criteria when considering late opening applications from licensed premises, encouraging venues to provide free transport home for night shift employees. This will significantly benefit the safety and wellbeing of hospitality workers, particularly women, who often cannot afford, or access, safe transport options late at night and benefit our community.
- 3) Publicly call for improvement to late night and off-peak transport service provision and encourage the County Council to access Government funding specifically to provide extra night services.
- 4) Publicly call for the permanent lowering of fares and oppose any cuts to public transport funding and for our elected Councillors to use their powers and political platforms to achieve this.
- 5) Oppose any cuts to public transport funding and any measures which decrease the travelling safety of women and vulnerable passengers.

- 6) Support calls for the municipal ownership of buses in order to permanently lower prices and improve service provision, including safety provision, especially for night-time and off-peak services.
- 7) Ask Group Leaders to write to the relevant Government Minister and request that national minimum standards for Hackneys and Private Hire are brought forward in support of this motion and its demands.
- 8) Ask Group Leaders to write to the relevant Government Minister to highlight this Council's support for the Get Me Home Safely campaign and ask for appropriate legislation to be introduced in support of this motion and its demands.