

Councillor resigns from Labour Group on South Tyneside Council amid allegations over her treatment by colleagues

A councillor has announced her resignation from South Tyneside Council's Labour group.

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Councillor Angela Hamilton hit out at Labour colleagues at a full council meeting on September 6 as she revealed she would be stepping away from the local authority's ruling political group.

The Beacon and Bents ward councillor has clashed with local party chiefs several times since being elected in 2018 and was previously stripped of the Labour whip.

She said she has since been blocked from standing for Labour in the next council elections.

Councillor Angela Hamilton has quit the Labour Group on South Tyneside Council. During a debate on a motion from opposition councillors this week, Cllr Hamilton announced she had officially cut ties with the council's Labour group and made several allegations about her treatment over the years.

She told the council meeting: "In 2018, I was privileged to be elected to represent the residents of the ward where I grew up.

"I was determined to be a good councillor and I spent time checking best practice, reading the code of conduct and getting to grips with Nolan's seven principles of public life – the rules that every councillor must follow.

She added: "When I acted in the public interest and supported a motion to declare a climate emergency the Labour group whip was suspended.

"When I voted for increased openness, more sanctions were imposed.

"And when I was honest with residents about changes to funding, the Labour group took action to stop me standing as a councillor next year."

Cllr Hamilton added: "Two weeks after I was elected, a colleague compared me in derogatory terms to a dead councillor.

"Officers have told me they're not allowed to help me and I have been refused access to information I need to support my residents.

"I have seen funding withdrawn from well-respected organisations that support vulnerable people without any consideration for the consequences and I have struggled to get support for a young resident who attempted to take their own life after losing all trust in the council.

“I have watched as those with connections in the right places have been allowed to close public footpaths and as council resources have been used to support candidates in elections.

“I hoped that things would be different [after the resignation of the previous \[council\] leader](#). I held out a hand of friendship to the current [council] leader but nothing has changed.”

The speech was interrupted at several points with some Labour members attempting to make a ‘point of order.’

But Cllr Hamilton continued: “Today, I’m resigning from South Tyneside Labour group, not the Labour Party, just the Labour group.

“I have no doubt that the Labour group will ask for me to be expelled and the [Labour Party’s] National Executive Committee will decide what action to take.

“Until then, I continue to be the Labour councillor who puts her residents first and I’ll ask those same residents to decide if they want me to stand again for election.”

Cllr Hamilton uploaded a full version of the speech on Facebook, in which indicated she expected to be “prevented from speaking” at the meeting.

In the video she added that after three years as a councillor, she realised “it is not possible to abide by the Nolan Principles and be a member of the Labour group.”

Labour MP for South Shields, Emma Lewell-Buck, said she was “heartbroken, disappointed and angry” that Cllr Hamilton felt she had no choice but to resign from the Group.

The MP described Cllr Hamilton as “the best of Labour” and called on her party to act.

Party branch resignation is a matter for the political party and not the council.

A spokesperson for [South Tyneside Council](#) said: “The political make-up of the council is unchanged at this time.”

Labour North has also been approached for comment.