

Last Friday marked the 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster. 97 men, women and children went to watch a football match and through no fault of their own, didn't come home. For more than three decades the families and loved ones of those who died haven't just had the indescribable grief to contend with; they've also been forced to deal with lies, smears, and injustice.

The impact of the campaign of lies, smears and propaganda orchestrated by South Yorkshire Police in 1989 and promoted by willing politicians and media continues to this day, with far too many members of the public still repeating those discredited lies.

At last week's final full council meeting of the year before the whole council elections on 5<sup>th</sup> May, I brought a motion committing the Council to stand with the Hillsborough survivors and the families of the victims, to recognise that more must be done to ensure that the cycle of injustice and lies that they experienced must not be repeated, and to support the Hillsborough Law campaign and the Real Truth Legacy Project.

Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram, Andy Burnham, and Ian Byrne MP have led the campaign, and Maria Eagle MP is trying to take a Public Advocate Bill – sponsored by our own MP Conor McGinn – to put into law safeguards to protect and support families in the event of a tragedy such as Hillsborough, Grenfell or the Manchester bombings.

At the same Council meeting, my Labour colleagues Cllr Lynn Clarke and Cllr Martin Bond also brought motions calling for government to enshrine the Armed Forces Covenant in law and to outlaw 'fire and rehire'.

Our Labour council is a strong supporter of our Armed Forces and Veterans. We're proud to be a Gold Award holder under Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, highlighting those employers leading the way in employment of veterans and reservists, and we do all we can to support veterans with housing, employment and health issues.

And as residents would also expect, as a Labour council we're firmly on the side of working people. Fire and rehire is a scandalous practice, as we've seen most recently with the appalling treatment of hundreds of workers by P&O.

On the face of it, these three motions might appear very different, but actually they're all about the same thing – fairness. Fairness for everyone who through no fault of their own faces unspeakable tragedy; fairness for those who proudly serve our country; and fairness for all of us at work.

Best wishes to all Star readers.