



## **LGBT+ Labour Questions - Rosena Allin-Khan Response**

### **1. What have you done in your time as a Member of Parliament and prior to your election to improve the lives of LGBT+ people?**

During my time in parliament I have tried to use my public platform to be the best ally I can be to the LGBT+ community. I am proud to work closely with the Wandsworth LGBTQ+ Forum, a local group of LGBT+ group in my constituency, to ensure their voice and concerns are being heard at a local and national level.

As Shadow Minister for Sport, I campaigned to eradicate homophobia from football, regularly meeting with the FA to ensure this remained high on the association's priority list. I also held an Opposition Day Debate in Parliament discussing discrimination in sport. I highlighted the discrimination against LGBT+ in everyday sport, at a professional and amateur level. I called for the Government to recognise discrimination against LGBT+ in the same we treat discrimination against BAME people.

I have been proud to champion the rights of trans people in Parliament. I have signed pledges and worked with LGBT+ groups to ensure that the rights of trans people are enshrined in law.

I have also worked with my Shadow DCMS colleagues to call for greater responsibility to social media sites in ousting hate speech on their platforms. The amount of hate speech directed to the LGBT+ community online is disgusting and the lack of regulation by social media sites has been shocking. I have called for the Government to step in in the face of social media companies' reluctance to act. We must not allow hate speech against LGBT+ people to be normalised in any way.

As Deputy Leader, I will continue to work closely with the LGBT+ community to ensure they feel supported by and an integral part of the Labour Party.

### **2. As Labour Deputy Leader, what is the first change in legislation you would campaign on to improve the lives of LGBT+ people?**

I am proud that the Labour Party has always been at the forefront of championing and supporting LGBT+ causes throughout our history, however I believe that much more could, and should, be done. I would like to see the Party commit to tangible policies which will benefit the lives of LGBT+ people, not just championing the cause through rhetoric.

I believe that we should legislate to recognise the discrimination of LGBT+ people as a particular hate crime. I was disappointed that our previous manifesto did not mention this. Another priority of mine would be to strengthen the Gender Recognition Act to enshrine the rights of trans and non-binary people.

LGBT+ people have long been discriminated against with regards to access to housing and other local government services. This must be addressed. Enshrining rights in legislation is one thing, however we then need to act to ensure LGBT+ groups have full access to these rights.

I would also work with local authorities of smaller communities in the UK, to ensure that LGBT+ people feel they have a safe space. I am often told it can be much harder for LGBT+ people in places outside of London and the big cities, we must ensure they are not forgotten about.

The Labour Party are the true party of equality in the UK, however we must ensure that our policies match our values. As Deputy Leader, I would work with LGBT+ Labour as our official affiliate partner, to ensure that LGBT+ policies are being developed and championed at a national level. Policies impacting LGBT+ people must be made in full partnership with them and I am fully committed to work with LGBT+ Labour to achieve this goal.

### **3. How will you root out incidences of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia alongside all other forms of discrimination in the Labour party?**

To root out all forms of discrimination I believe that the complaints process must be completely separate from Labour HQ. The current disciplinary process is handled by the NEC and NCC, which are political positions in the party. As representatives are elected by Labour members, they stand on political slates, which makes it extremely difficult to ensure there is no bias in the process. By separating the process, it would ensure that all cases of discrimination within the party are heard based on their merits, not political consequences.

After this process has been separated, I would get the new team to review all discrimination cases, including against LGBT+ members. I would put a time limit on cases to ensure they are resolved swiftly, and ensuring perpetrators are removed urgently. Discrimination in any form has no place in our party - we must enact upon each independent investigation, taking the necessary action.

Taking action against members who commit hate speech or are discriminating against LGBT+ members is a necessary step, but it still does not tackle the root of the issue. That is why I believe we must ensure that we are educating members at a constituency level, the same as we would members at national level, to ensure that all LGBT+ members feel the Labour Party is a safe space for them.

### **4. How would you ensure that an increased number of diverse LGBT+ people are selected to represent the Labour Party at all levels of local devolved and national elected office?**

As Deputy Leader, I would invite LGBT+ Labour to work with the Labour Party as our official affiliate, using their knowledge and experience to help improve internal structures within the Party.

I would like to see reserved places for LGBT+ people on regional boards to ensure they have a say in party processes and can directly influence policy. I believe we must also work to ensure that these reserved positions would be representative of the whole LGBT+ community. We have made

great strides in ensuring that certain groups are beginning to be better represented, however we must strive to ensure that trans people and LGBT+ women are also represented within the party.

We have some great leadership programmes within the party that helps give vital experience to BAME and working class members, however I believe we must promote these same schemes to our LGBT+ members. Many graduates from these schemes go onto become elected representatives at all levels of government, so by working to widen these schemes and by advertising more of them to LGBT+ members, it would be a step in the right direction in ensuring more LGBT+ members are ultimately selected to stand for election for Labour.

As someone who has had to go through selection meetings as a BAME woman, I know how intimidating they can be, especially when the panel is not representative. I believe we must have selection panels which are representative of our whole membership and that means ensuring that LGBT+ people are on them. By having representative panels, I believe it will make the whole experience less daunting and it will ensure more LGBT+ members stand for selection.