

COUNCIL		
Report Title	Motion in the name of Councillor Sorba to be seconded by Councillor Bell	
Key Decision		Item No.
Ward		
Contributors	Chief Executive (Head of Business & Committee)	
Class	Part 1	Date: June 24 2015

“This Council resolves to register its opposition to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership currently being negotiated between the USA and The European Union on the following grounds –

1. TTIP limits the freedom of Local and Central government to choose how they wish to deliver or procure goods and services for the public thereby undermining our duty to the people who we are elected to represent. Under the Treaty it will prove almost impossible to resist increasing demands from transnational corporations demanding contracts for the delivery of health, medical and other vital services. The right to regulate the market, including the labour market, for the public benefit at local or national level on the basis of political mandates or material circumstances is a key lever of government in any democracy. Losing this freedom will significantly affect the wellbeing of the citizens we serve.
2. TTIP endangers necessary environmental, health and safety regulation designed to protect consumers. The principle of “harmonisation” in the Treaty is designed to pushdown safeguards to the minimum – e.g unlimited access of genetically modified ingredients, chlorine-washed chicken, hormone-injected beef and endocrine-disrupting chemicals in pesticides currently approved in the USA but not Europe to become commonplace. TTIP will allow the importation of cosmetics with more than 1000 chemicals that the EU bans (to the 11 of the US) and will abandon the “Precautionary principle” which prohibits agents and activities deemed to be dangerous until they can be proven safe, in favour of the US notion that there should be no ban unless the damage has already been proven to result.
3. TTIP transfers the authority to deliver judgement on disputes between elected bodies and commercial organisations from our independent judiciary to an unaccountable and secret panel of international trade lawyers. The Investor-State Dispute Settlement allows any foreign investor in a signatory State to sue elected governments if it feels their actions have disadvantaged its commercial interests. The panel is not required to publish reasons for its decisions, there is no right of appeal, and they override national laws and bypass the courts.
4. Negotiations have been taking place under a cloud of secrecy and under pressure from a disproportionate number of lobbyists on behalf of transnational corporations especially those from the financial sector.
5. There has been no assessment of the potential impact on local authorities.

6. There has been no scrutiny of the negotiating texts by local government and no consultation with local government representatives.

This Council notes that of June 1st 2015, 470 organisations and 1.8 million individuals throughout Europe have registered their opposition to TTIP by signing a European Citizens' Initiative. The 30 plus UK organisations listed include War on Want, Friends of the Earth, 38 Degrees, Health Poverty Action, GMB, Unite the Union, UNISON, NUT et al. We also note that several sovereign states have been or are being sued by private corporations, under equivalent treaties, where governments' public-minded policies are deemed to threaten their private profits: e.g. America's Philip Morris suing Australia for introducing plain packaging of tobacco products, Egypt being sued by France's Veolia for raising the National Minimum Wage, Quebec being sued for banning Fracking, Germany for its stance on Nuclear power and Slovakia being sued by Dutch HICC over changes in its health insurance legislation.

Finally we assert that there is insufficient evidence to support the claims being made that the Treaty will lead to a bonanza of new jobs and significant economic growth. The very similar US-South Korea Free Trade Agreement was followed by not a rise but a fall in US exports and jobs; the North American Free Trade Agreement led to massive job losses in the US and Canada.

We ask the Mayor to publicise Lewisham Council's concerns about TTIP, join with other local authorities which are opposed to TTIP across Europe and work with local campaigners to raise awareness about the problems of TTIP.

We ask the mayor to contact the London representatives on the Committee of the Regions informing them of our concerns.

We also pass on notice of this resolution to, and urge that it is taken note of by the Minister for Europe, David Lidington MP; the Shadow Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Hilary Benn MP; the Leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party, Glenis Willmott MEP; and the EPLP Spokesperson for TTIP and European Parliament Trade Committee member, Judith Kirton-Darling MEP, Heidi Alexander MP, Jim Dowd MP and Vicky Foxcroft MP and to all MEP's whose constituency includes the Borough of Lewisham."