



Full Council – 11 July 2022

Liberal Democrats Group Motion

Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

This Council notes:

That refugees and asylum seekers are human beings who deserve our full respect and support.

The way in which Boris Johnson's government talks about and presents refugees, who face their plight through no fault of their own, is deeply un-British, offensive and shameful.

Our own borough is home to people from all corners of the world and all wish to make a valuable contribution to our international community.

Brent must remain welcoming of refugees and asylum seekers and offer required leadership from a local government level by ensuring refugees who arrive in our community have access to needed support and are given the basic opportunities afforded to all in order that they can make a contribution to society.

Organisations like Care 4 Calais, English for Action, Salusbury World, Young Roots, amongst others, are doing crucial work in our community to help settle refugees and offer basic support, whether through English classes that they run or by seeking to address the immense mental trauma many refugees have and are experiencing.

This Council therefore calls on the government to:

1. Drop its shameful, un-British Rwanda policy.
2. End the hostile environment that seeks to criminalise people who have been forced to flee their homelands through no fault of their own.
3. Acknowledge asylum seekers are making dangerous, tragically, all too often, fatal journeys across Europe to seek sanctuary and safety and therefore must allow asylum seekers the legal right of passage into the UK.
4. Give refugees and asylum seekers the ability to play a full part in our society and economy by giving those who arrive in the UK a right to work quickly under defined and reasonable terms.

This Council also resolves to:

1. Immediately establish and publish a directory of ESOL provision within our borough on the Council website and also provide easy access benefit and other advice to those who need it.
2. Extend free bus travel to asylum seekers through the existing payment card system.
3. Organise a Brent Refugee Summit by the end of this year (2022), bringing together organisations, mainly in the voluntary sector, who are currently working to support refugees and asylum seekers locally. This will show a united and concerted effort from this Council that people who arrive locally are welcome here and that Brent will play our part in helping to settle people who given the tools will make hugely valuable contributions to our borough - as those who came before them always have.

Councillor Anton Georgiou
Alperton Ward