



## Item 9.4

**Full Council – 8 July 2024**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Labour Group Motion**

### **Brent - A Borough of Sanctuary**

#### **This Council notes:**

- That Brent is proud of its diversity, and its history of welcoming refugees and displaced people from around the world fleeing conflict, climate change, discrimination, and violence.
- That, as a Council, we will stand up for those travelling to this country to make a better life for themselves, and champion the contribution of refugees to our Borough.
- That this Council and our communities have worked hard to provide homes and support to refugees – including rehousing **14** Syrian refugee families in London since 2016, **23** Afghan families arriving since 2021 and now supporting **571** Ukrainian individuals through Homes for Ukraine.
- That this Council is committed to supporting refugees, from ESOL classes in our libraries to direct support in our hubs.
- That this Council has consistently condemned the Rwanda resettlement scheme as an economically illiterate and morally reprehensible failure in statecraft; with our borders no more secure, while also simultaneously failing in our international obligations to refugees.
- Failings by the Home Office have a direct impact on both the council and the people of Brent. This includes a record backlog of cases awaiting a decision, a de facto ban on working, and increased homelessness in the borough.
- This Council's previous support of Refugee Action's 'Lift the Ban' campaign, allowing refugees to work while awaiting an asylum decision.

#### **This Council welcomes:**

- The work of our residents and community partners to provide services, support, care and advice to refugees and displaced people arriving in our Borough. Brent

Council could not provide an effective welcome and support offer to refugees without the active support and participation of countless community organisations.

- The growing movement of Boroughs across London and the country becoming Boroughs of Sanctuary, as a rebuke to anti-refugee rhetoric.

**This Council celebrates:**

- Our refugees' contributions to making Brent the dynamic and diverse place that we call home.
- The resolve of the Council's elected members to provide a welcoming civic community and home for refugees in Brent.
- The previous work undertaken by the Brent Multi-Faith Forum, who have endorsed the City of Sanctuary Charter and who work tirelessly with organisations throughout the borough to support those who have been displaced.

**This Council resolves to:**

- (1) Build on our existing commitment and work with partners to provide real sanctuary and support to refugees in Brent.
- (2) Join the network of cities and towns which promote the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution and become a recognised Borough of Sanctuary.
- (3) Work with key partners, commissioned services, and our voluntary sector to achieve Borough of Sanctuary accreditation, celebrating the contribution of those seeking sanctuary.
- (4) Stand ready to provide any support needed and open our arms to innocent people displaced because of the conflict in Gaza.
- (5) To write to the Secretary of State, to encourage the UK to join other nations and bring children injured in Gaza, Sudan and other conflicts around the world to sanctuary in the UK, in order to receive urgent and lifesaving medical treatment.

Councillor Teo Benea  
Sudbury Ward