

**Full Council – 7 July 2025**

**Amendment submitted by the Labour Group to the Conservative Group Motion**

*Proposed amendment – To add the wording underlined in red and delete the wording indicated:*

**Protecting Equality and Community Cohesion in Brent's International Partnerships.**

This Council notes:

- Brent is proudly one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, home to communities of several faiths, ethnicities and backgrounds. People from across the globe are drawn to Brent, making it their home for work, family and the chance to build a safer life.
- The ongoing importance of ensuring all Council decisions, particularly international partnerships, uphold values of equity, and inclusion, ~~and political neutrality.~~
- The Council's decision to twin with Nablus has ~~caused division~~ triggered welcome conversation about Brent Council's ongoing plan to build new international relationships with cities and towns across the world ~~borough.~~
- ~~The Equalities Impact Assessment provided as part of the decision to enter a twinning arrangement with Nablus stated the twinning 'may cause emotional harm to some groups in Brent' and 'may risk compounding antisemitism', while also suggesting rejecting the partnership 'may be viewed as Islamophobic'.~~
- As part of the ongoing process relating to entering the twinning arrangements with Nablus, the Council will continuously update the completed equality impact assessment and, as part of that ongoing assessment the Council will routinely engage with community groups for feedback. ~~there was no meaningful engagement with key groups including Hindus, Christians, and the Jewish community on the community assessment or proposal prior to the decision.~~
- For now, ~~t~~The UK Foreign Office advises against all travel to all parts of the West Bank, raising concerns about the safety and viability of a meaning that our mutual

exchange arrangement with Nablus will utilise different methods of engagement and hosting activities.

This Council believes:

- All twinning decisions must be guided by equalities compliance, transparency, and wide community support.
- There is a need for the Council to ensure that an equality impact assessment is undertaken to assess the impact of the activities proposed in the twinning arrangements on Brent residents and those with protected characteristics in order to safeguard the borough's values ~~Partnering with towns where access is unsafe for some Brent residents due to nationality, religion or sexual orientation contradicts our borough's values.~~
- ~~Solidarity and g~~ Global engagement are is important but must not override our duties under the Equality Act or risk harming community cohesion.

This Council resolves:

- (1) To continuously review and update the equalities impact assessment in relation to each individual twinning or friendship agreement ~~introduce a new Equalities Compliance Protocol for future international partnerships requiring:~~
  - A published Equalities Impact Assessment before any vote entering into any future twinning arrangements.
  - Engagement ~~Formal consultation~~ with Brent's major faith and community groups.
  - Assessment of safety and access for all protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation). ~~groups, including LGBTQ+ residents.~~
- ~~(2) To confirm that international partnerships should remain apolitical and avoid affiliation with any side in an ongoing foreign conflict.~~
- (3) To request that Council regularly reviews the International Partnering Protocol and framework, ensuring it is ~~including all current twinning arrangements, to ensure~~ in alignment with Brent's equality duties and community priorities.
- (4) To reaffirm support for partnerships reflecting shared values of democracy, inclusion and access for all residents.

Councillor Muhammed Butt  
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