

Motion to welcome, support and accommodate our fair share of refugees both locally and nationally

This Council notes that:

Conflicts in the Middle East have created the largest refugee crisis in generations.

Thousands of people have died while seeking sanctuary from the violence this year alone trying to cross the Mediterranean sea; many of them were children.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role as one of the world's top international donors, supporting refugees in Syria and the surrounding area.

The UN estimates there are over 320,000 people though who live in urgent need of resettlement. Survivors of torture or sexual violence, the very elderly or disabled, there are people who cannot survive in UN refugee camps near in countries surrounding Syria.

The UK has a long and important tradition of offering sanctuary to those who need protection. 100,000 Huguenots, 10,000 Jewish Kinder transport children spared the Nazi concentration camps, 160,000 Poles following the Second World War many of whom had served in the Battle of Britain, the Vietnamese Boat People, the 28,000 Asian Ugandans fleeing Idi Amin and the people who fled the war in Kosovo. This is our proud and decent tradition.

To play its part fully in solving this global crisis the British government must work for durable long term political solutions in the region, lead as a major international donor, and live up to its reputation as a place of sanctuary, integration and protection.

This Council believes:

- That this crisis will be better managed if incoming refugees are accommodated around the whole country;
- We can best rise to the crisis if a National Welcome and Resettlement Board bringing together local and national government, civil society and business leadership, is created to oversee efforts to resettle refugees and mobilise public support as in times past;
- Long term political solutions are needed to ease the crisis, but in the mean time we must do what we can;
- The UK must welcome its fair share of refugees to ease this crisis.

This Council resolves to:

- Formally express an interest in both the VPR and Gateway programmes to the Home Office, requesting that 100 refugees be resettled here;
- Write to local housing associations to encourage them to make properties available to resettle refugees;
- To commit to ensuring that refugees are welcomed in this area and help facilitate this process by coordinating local service provision and coordinating the immense public will to help;
- Write to the Prime Minister to assure him that the country stands ready and willing to help at this time of crisis.

Proposed: Cllr Julian Ware-Lane **Seconded:** Cllr Cheryl Nevin