



Council
15 October 2024

WORTHING BOROUGH
COUNCIL

Ward(s) Affected: All

Motion on Notice

Report by the Director for Sustainability & Resources

Officer Contact Details:-

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Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The report before Council sets out a motion received from Councillor Claire Hunt which has been seconded by Councillor Hilary Schan.
- 1.2. Council is asked to consider, debate and determine the motion under provisions set out in paragraph 14 of the Council Procedure Rules (part 4 of the Council Constitution - Rules of Procedure).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Council is asked to consider and determine the motion as set out in Annex A to this report.

3. Context

- 3.1 A motion on notice has been received from Councillor Claire Hunt, (attached as Annex A).
- 3.2 The content of the motion is relevant to a matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties and which specifically affects the Borough.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 Motions considered by Full Council are done so under part 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules and are debated under rules set out under part 16 of the Council Procedure Rules.
- 4.2 The Council is asked to consider, debate and determine the motion under these rules accordingly.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial impacts arising from the motion as it is declaratory.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Rules concerning motions are set out in the Council's Constitution under section 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

Background Papers

None.

Worthing: A Welcoming, Caring Community

This council values the huge positive contribution that all our diverse communities make to the social, cultural and community life of our town. We are proud to have welcomed people from many parts of the world, including refugees from conflict zones in recent years.

We recognise that many people are feeling fearful or unwelcome as a result of:

- Recent violent attacks on Muslim communities and migrants in other parts of the country, instigated by far-right organisers after the killing of three children in Southport and fuelled by misinformation on social media.
- A sharp rise in both Islamophobia and anti-semitism since the Israel/Gaza crisis
- Local protests in Chichester against a migrant hostel
- Toxic narratives that have gone unchallenged for so long, that scapegoat people of colour and people who move to seek safety from war, disadvantage and discrimination, as being the cause of problems like lack of housing or employment opportunities.

We want Worthing to be a town that welcomes, includes and engages with our neighbours, wherever they are from, however long they've been here and however long they are staying. We want everyone to feel safe and welcome and to guard against potential divisions between our local communities. We recognise that the welfare of all and community cohesion needs to be supported, especially between new and existing communities. We want to be a town that starts from the position that more things unite us than separate us so that we promote kindness and turn hostility into harmony.

This motion asks the council to:

1. As part of the Council for the Community approach and Neighbourhood model, consider how community conversations could be held with key stakeholders, staff and residents, about experiences of racism, migration and community cohesion. This would build on work that has already been undertaken (see background notes) and would be a key step in the council working towards being more than non-racist but actively anti-racist, including against Islamophobia and anti-semitism.
2. Aspire to welcoming, including and supporting people forced to flee their own homes to seek sanctuary in support of the 'City of Sanctuary' vision, as far as our specific context enables us to and work towards becoming a Borough of Sanctuary. To raise awareness of what it means to be seeking sanctuary, take positive action to support and include those people, and let others know the positive contribution they make to society and the benefits of a welcoming culture to everyone. To consider opportunities to support local partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors who are working to help people seeking sanctuary.

3. Acknowledge that Gypsy, Roma and Travellers are a category of 'people who move', who have been subjected to genocide in the past and still face disadvantage, discrimination and hate crime and seek to work in a collaborative way, with all voices heard, towards community cohesion between those that visit the area and settled local communities.

Background context

The councils have an Equalities Statement and Policy (updated 2023), and the corporate plan 'Our Plan' describes ways of working that are inclusive and kind. Equalities Objectives and Commitments include increasing inclusion through participation and engagement and the gathering of equalities and diversity data to better understand our communities. See link below:

[Equalities and diversity - Adur & Worthing Councils](#)

Our diverse communities contribute to the social, cultural and community life of the town in many ways, for example, the work of two successive Muslim Mayors, the charitable Henna Foundation, Hanukkah celebrations, a regular Holocaust Memorial event, Black History Month, Filipino, Hindu and Ukrainian communities cultural events, Worthing Pride, and other arts and culture events including those at Worthing Theatres and Museum.

There are also many examples of anti-racist work and support for refugees already being done by community and third sector groups in the town, including Stand Up to Racism, Parents for Peace, Worthing 4 Refugees, CREW Climate Resilience Centre, churches, Worthing Mosque's Islamophobia awareness work in schools and Open Days, and more.

For more details about the City of Sanctuary movement:

<https://cityofsanctuary.org>

Proposer - Councillor Claire Hunt
Seconder - Councillor Hilary Schan