

(iii) Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration

A motion had been received and set in the Summons in the names of: Councillors Arif, Bernstein, Brown, Dean, Gartside, Harris, Hussain, Jones, Lancaster, McBriar, Rydeheard, Vernon

The United Kingdom has long been a safe haven for those individuals, and groups of people, who have had to flee their countries of origin due to religious, political, and social persecution. People also migrate for economic reasons due to unemployment, conflict, war, famine, and other natural disasters.

We are proud of our Country's humanitarian legacy in accepting refugees, asylum seekers through fair and legal means such as through the United Nation's Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme (VPRS).

However, this motion aims to deal head on with a new and dangerous phenomena that is putting the lives of innocent men, women and children in grave danger and is leading to loss of life.

Since the beginning of 2022, more than 40,000 ~~REMOVE~~ [illegal immigrants] ~~INSERT~~ [people], many of whom are at the mercy of criminal human trafficking gangs, have crossed the English Channel in small boats. This is up from 28,526 in 2021.

~~REMOVE~~ [It is the view of many people living within the Borough of Bury, that this is one of the most pressing issues which our country faces today.

~~The increasing number of illegal migrants are putting a great deal of pressure on local services throughout the country and the residents of Bury are rightly concerned that the situation seen elsewhere with local hotels being commandeered for large numbers of irregular migrants could happen here in Bury. This would of course put intolerable pressure on local services.]~~

We are not against lawful and controlled migration. On the contrary, we are immensely grateful to those who have made the United Kingdom their home and have shaped our nation for the better. Whether this be through working within the NHS or in other public, private and charitable fields.

Overseas workers are an integral part of our nation's fabric and diversity.

~~REMOVE~~ [However, what we cannot condone, under any circumstances, is the arrival upon our shores of those who have deployed illegal and criminal means to enter the United Kingdom.

~~Whilst we sympathise with some of those who try to enter the UK through crossings, many are doing so in order to commit heinous crimes in the United Kingdom.]~~

We must also remember that many criminal gangs and prohibited organisations are profiting at the misfortune of those crossing in small boats and putting the lives of those who chose to cross in this manner at serious risk of danger.

It is incumbent on us all as elected officials to guarantee that the law of this country is upheld and respected.

Therefore, we must do all we can to prevent these illegal crossings and acts of illegal migration from occurring.

That is why we are asking this Council to do the following:-

INSERT [* Fully support Labour's five-point plan to tackle Channel crossings, which includes:

- Redirecting spending on Rwanda to set up a new National Crime Agency cell to crack down on smuggling gangs
- Speeding up asylum decisions
- Reforming settlement schemes
- Replacing the Dublin Agreement to include safe returns and family reunion
- Working internationally to address why people flee their homes]

* Condemn the criminal gangs and organisations that are putting the lives of men, women and children at risk by enforcing small boat crossings in the English Channel.

REMOVE [~~* Fully support the UK Government's plans to reduce these illegal crossings through a strategic partnership with our European neighbours.~~]

* Instruct the Chief Executive to write to both the Bury North and Bury South Members of Parliament to ask that they support **REMOVE** [~~the Government's plans to tackle illegal immigration and support offshore processing of illegal immigrants.~~] **INSERT** [an ethical and effective immigration policy.]