

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Motion 1

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Councillor Clarke (28 June 2023)

“1. That this Council notes that:

- a) This year on the 22 June was the 75th Anniversary of HMT Empire Windrush, which in 1948 was the first crossing that brought hundreds of Caribbeans to the UK during the post-war period to help the country rebuild, the families of some of whom settled in Milton Keynes to the city’s great benefit.
- b) The Windrush Scandal which emerged in April 2018 due to the Conservative government’s ‘hostile environment’ policy saw the British Home Office deny residency rights and citizenship to many people who had been living in the UK legally for if not most, but all of their lives. Thousands of people across the UK were stripped of their British passports, right to work, healthcare, and benefits.
- c) The Windrush Compensation Scheme that was launched in 2019 designed to ensure those affected could receive payments for the devastating effects on their lives has so far only resulted in 1,518 people receive compensation for their suffering, and a further 1,988 with eligible claims have been awarded no compensation.
- d) People have been forced out of their homes and jobs, causing many to become homeless and fall ill as they have had no access to healthcare.
- e) The Compensation Scheme does not cover any legal fees for any applicants making claims, this means that for many who have been left jobless and in debt, they can’t afford the legal representation they need to complete the claim.
- f) Where compensation has been received, in some cases payments have been made only after the person has died.

2. That this Council believes that:

- a) The Windrush Compensation Scheme is not fit for purpose, the 44-page long application form is complex, and the requirements make it almost impossible for people to prove their status.
- b) The Windrush generation are victims through no fault of their own, they were invited here by the British Government and have worked hard all their lives, paying tax and national insurance yet they are being denied access to compensation.
- c) The Government should make the scheme more accessible, and as suggested in the Windrush Lessons Learnt Review, the Home Secretary should appoint a migrant’s commissioner and commit to holding reconciliation events with people affected to listen and reflect on their stories.

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3. That this Council resolves to:
 - a) Ask the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Home Secretary to:
 - i) ask for the Windrush Compensation Scheme process to be simplified and for legal aid to be awarded; and
 - ii) request the appointment of a migrant's commissioner and commit to holding reconciliation events with people affected to listen and reflect on their stories, as suggested in the Windrush Lessons Learned Review.
 - b) Continue leading the way by celebrating an annual Windrush Day in Milton Keynes to celebrate and recognise the huge contribution of the Windrush generation and the community groups here today that continue to support residents across the city.
 - c) Ensure the appointed Ethnic Minority Champion attends Windrush celebrations each year to mark the impact of their contribution to Milton Keynes.”