

NOTICE OF MOTION
GREEN AND LABOUR GROUPS
CHILD REFUGEES

This Council requests that the Chief Executive:

- Write to the Home Secretary, restating our offer to house child refugees,
- Write to the Prime Minister, asking him to publicly avow his support for the basic principle of Safe Passage, and to state categorically that Brexit legislation will not be used to prevent children trapped in horrendous conditions in France, Greece, and Italy from reuniting with their families in the UK.

Proposed by: Cllr Littman

Seconded by: Cllr Allcock

Supporting Information:

- The Council has made an offer to central Government as part of a scheme to house vulnerable refugee children from conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa
- This scheme has been running for three years, and was designed to resettle 3,000, and yet so far, a mere 20 unaccompanied minors have been allowed into the UK under it
- Parliament has jettisoned a commitment to safeguard asylum-seeking minors' rights to reunite with their families in the UK; as part of the Brexit Bill;
- On January 8th 2020 MPs voted 348 to 252 against an amendment to protect the right of refugee children to reunite with their families in the UK.

Reactions included:

Lord Dubs: *"..the first real act of the new Boris Johnson government is to kick these children in the teeth. It is a betrayal of Britain's humanitarian tradition and will leave children who are very vulnerable existing in danger in northern France and in the Greek islands."*

Caroline Lucas MP: *"Just for the avoidance of doubt, the Tories dutifully trooping through the 'no' lobbies right now are voting against an amendment that says its aim is to 'protect the right for unaccompanied child refugees to be reconciled with their family after Brexit.'"*

Baroness Bennett: *"This decision destroys a crucial route by which unaccompanied refugee children are able to join family members in the UK from other EU countries. Those children are some of the most vulnerable people on this planet – yet the government plans to abandon them."*

