


Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>COUNCIL</b>  20 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Motion for debate submitted by an Opposition Group</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one Motion submitted by an Opposition Group. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, submission of the Opposition Motion for Debate will alternate in sequence between the opposition groups. This Opposition Motion is submitted by the Labour Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

## MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

## OPPOSITION MOTION FOR DEBATE TO ADOPT THE MIGRANT CARE WORKERS' CHARTER

**Proposer:** Cllr Amy Lee

**Seconder:** Cllr Asma Islam

### **This Council notes:**

1. That the **adult social care sector** relies heavily on migrant care workers, who play an essential role in providing compassionate and quality care for residents.
2. That since the introduction of the Health and Care Worker Visa, there has been a marked increase in reports of **modern slavery** and **exploitation** of migrant care workers within the sector, including issues such as excessive recruitment fees, debt bondage, withheld wages, and poor working conditions.
3. That the [Migrant Care Workers' Charter](#), developed by UNISON, seeks to address these abuses and protect migrant care workers from exploitation by setting out standards for fair recruitment, accommodation, employment practices, and rights in the workplace.
4. That **Salford Council** has already signed and adopted this charter as part of its commitment to support the rights and welfare of migrant care workers.

### **This Council believes:**

1. That all care workers, including migrants, deserve to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, regardless of their nationality or immigration status.
2. That adopting the Migrant Care Workers' Charter will strengthen Tower Hamlets' commitment to **combat modern slavery** and **labour exploitation** in our local care sector, ensuring ethical practices in recruitment, fair employment conditions, and a safe working environment for all.
3. That this Council has a responsibility to protect migrant care workers from exploitation, enhance oversight of contracted care providers, and lead by example by committing to ethical employment standards in the social care sector.
4. That taking this step will improve the standards of care in Tower Hamlets, protect the wellbeing of care workers, and foster a fairer, more inclusive community.

### **This Council resolves to call on the Mayor to implement the following:**

1. **Be the first London Borough to sign the Migrant Care Workers' Charter** and formally adopt its commitments to promote ethical recruitment, safe and fair working conditions, and equal rights for migrant care workers across the borough.
2. **Implement the Charter's Standards** by mandating that all contracted care providers and agencies adhere to the principles outlined in the charter, including ensuring that:
  - Ensure all providers publish an annual **modern slavery statement**.
  - Recruitment fees are borne by employers, not workers, in line with the '**employer pays**' principle.
  - Migrant care workers are given equal access to **employment rights**, fair wages, and necessary workplace protections.
3. **Appoint a Dedicated Oversight Officer** to monitor compliance with the charter and to review all council contracts within the care sector, ensuring providers meet these standards and take proactive steps to prevent exploitation.
4. **Work in Partnership with Trade Unions** such as UNISON to support migrant care workers, providing access to union representatives, clear terms and conditions of employment, and information on how to raise concerns safely.
5. **Apply to the Home Office** for a licence to sponsor migrant care workers, enabling the Council to act as a **sponsor of last resort** to protect workers who face sudden

job loss or exploitation by unethical employers.

6. **Raise Awareness and Support** by launching an information campaign within the care sector to educate both employers and workers on their rights and responsibilities under the charter.
7. By adopting this charter, Tower Hamlets Council will take a stand against exploitation in the care sector and commit to upholding the highest standards of dignity and respect for migrant care workers.