

ASPIRE AMENDMENT TO OPPOSITION MOTION TO ADOPT THE MIGRANT CARE WORKERS' CHARTER

Proposer: Cllr Abu Talha Chowdhury

Seconder: Cllr Sabina Akthar

Additions in red and underlined.

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 the current administration has tried to strengthen the rights of care workers through the guarantee that no care worker is obliged to accept a zero hours contract, and that all providers must offer between 16-32 hours contracts to their carers.**
5. 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.
5. That any individual or provider found to be exploiting migrant workers economically should be reported to the police immediately.

This Council resolves to:

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 all the Council's recognised 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 and across the borough to educate both employers and workers on their rights and responsibilities under the charter. This campaign should be visible across the council's assets.
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.
8. Establish a joint taskforce with borough commander to ensure that those found guilty of imposing exploitation and modern slavery will be prosecuted with the swiftest action.

9. To explore the establishment of an anonymous hotline in collaboration with the borough commander to provide residents and carers with the opportunity to report such behaviours.