

MAYOR OF LONDON

Len Duvall OBE AM

Chair of the London Assembly
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Our ref: MGLA171123-0501

Date: 28 May 2025

Dear Len,

London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 2 November 2023 – Motions

Thank you for the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 2 November 2023. My response to motion 3.4 is set out below. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

Motion 3.4 – Multiculturalism in London

London would not be the welcoming and truly global city it is without its people, who come from all over the world. The generations of people who have come to the capital and chosen to call it home have continuously shaped and strengthened our communities, culture, and economy in myriad ways. The city also has a proud history of providing refuge to those seeking sanctuary, and I have been committed to supporting those most vulnerable to access the help they need.

Ensuring that London's multicultural communities are respected and protected

Through campaigns such as 'London is open', 'London together', 'We all make London' and 'London for Everyone', and now the 'Loved and Wanted' campaign, I have repeatedly demonstrated my commitment to uniting communities, celebrating the capital's diversity, and promoting mutual respect. I continue to use campaigning to affirm that while we may be from different communities, speak many languages, and hold varying beliefs, we all belong in London and help make it the greatest city in the world. It is a vital reminder that we stand together and that we have far more in common than that which divides us.

We have seen a concerning rise in hate crime across our city and nationwide. In times marred by division and fear, I am committed to seeing Londoners respond with unity and hope. In addition to signposting Londoners to vital support through campaigns, I also continue to invest in services designed to tackle hate crime. Through my Shared Endeavour Fund, I have supported civic society projects that work with a diverse range of communities to challenge hatred and intolerance before they result in abuse or attacks. I have also ensured that specialist victim services are available for those targeted and will continue to work to raise awareness of hate crime and how to respond.

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Ensuring migrants have the same opportunities to thrive

I am committed to a vision where all Londoners can thrive irrespective of immigration status, and I have continued to stand against policies that lead to discrimination and exclusion, such as those faced by the Windrush Generation. I am committed to working with the Government to address these challenges.

I am investing strategically in the immigration advice sector, including through a programme with Refugee Action, to grow the number of organisations qualified to give immigration advice. I have invested in training to upskill social services in meeting the needs of migrant children in care and a training programme to support migrant victims of exploitation in the workplace. I also continue to invest in the Migrant Londoners Hub, which aims to equip Londoners with immigration needs with an understanding of their rights, entitlements, and the services available, including specific employment information.

I have led a programme to welcome and integrate new arrivals from Hong Kong under the BN(O) visa through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Hong Kong Welcome Programme. This includes investing in grassroots Hong Kong civil society, local authority capacity to support Hongkongers, and mental health work to improve service provision for culturally nuanced and trauma-informed provision for Hongkongers.

I have also worked to remove barriers to integration facing migrant and refugee communities. This includes using my powers over the Adult Skills Fund to remove residency barriers that prevent refugee and asylum-seeking Londoners from accessing the support they need to learn new skills, especially English language skills.

I have provided funding to enable members of the Ukrainian community to access legal advice and support and provided strategic support to the Homes for Ukraine scheme to enable stakeholders to understand and address the challenges faced by the community.

Supporting refugees and asylum seekers in London

We have a responsibility to help those fleeing oppression and violence, and I am committed to supporting asylum seekers and refugees living in London to be able to access their rights and entitlements and live with dignity in London. I have been proactive in engaging with the new Government to learn the lessons from previous attempts to deal with the asylum backlog, working with them towards an end to reliance on hotels, and to reduce the asylum backlog.

Through the London Strategic Migration Partnership (LSMP), I continue to use my convening powers to bring together London's most senior stakeholders and address key strategic challenges impacting London in relation to migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum. The Board is chaired by my Deputy Mayor, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, and works in close partnership with London Councils and the voluntary and community sectors as well as the Government and their commissioned service providers.

Through the London Asylum Oversight Group, which LSMP officers convene, partners are working towards a strategy for the procurement of more community-based accommodation for people seeking asylum and towards ending reliance on unsuitable contingency hotel accommodation. Through the London Asylum Civil Society Forum, we bring civil society partners, the Home Office, and its accommodation providers together to provide accountability for the delivery of support, including addressing acute challenges in contingency hotels. My Migration Team commissioned

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independent research on safeguarding in hotels, highlighting key concerns, and will work with the Government and partners in London to try and address them.

I secured £126m in capital grant funding from the Government's £500m Local Authority Housing Fund to be administered as the Refugee Housing Programme (RHP) in London. The RHP will fund the delivery of up to 630 affordable homes for those with acute housing needs who have arrived in the UK via recent Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement schemes. The LSMP plays a direct role in matching eligible refugees to accommodation as it comes online.

I have also taken an active role in supporting effective delivery and best practice for London boroughs through my Asylum Welcome Design Labs and investment into comprehensive guidance for local authorities delivering refugee resettlement and ESOL.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

Sir Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London