

Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Bradford, on Tuesday, 9 July 2013 at 1600.

**COUNCIL
9 JULY 2013
MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

8. ASYLUM AND DESTITUTION

To be moved by Councillor Azam

Seconded by Councillor Imran Hussain

The Council notes:

- a) Its decision of March 2009 for Bradford District to become a City of Sanctuary and acknowledges that in doing so it recognised the plight of asylum seekers forced to flee their home countries.
- b) The work of Destitution Concern Bradford in examining the extent and impact of destitution on asylum seekers in Bradford and shares their concerns about the level of destitution.
- c) That if asylum seekers have their case refused by the Home Officer they lose all financial support and accommodation and are prevented from working and that this can force them into abject poverty and homelessness.
- d) That the destitution of refused asylum seekers places increased pressure on the charities and communities that meet their most basic human needs.
- e) The recent Children's Society report into support for asylum seekers that found widespread evidence of destitution, its negative impact on children and of the need to reform the asylum support system if it is to have regard to the safety and well being of children.

The Council resolves to:

- 1) Re-state its commitment to Bradford District being a City of Sanctuary.
- 2) Write to the Minister of State for Immigration making clear its opposition to the use of destitution as a policy tool to force refused asylum seekers to leave the UK while they continue to state their case for a safe haven from persecution.

- 3) Request the Home Office to ensure that it continues to provide financial support and accommodation until a safe return is negotiated or an individual leaves the UK or leave to remain is granted, and to provide good quality legal advice at all stages of the asylum process.
- 4) Write to the Government seeking a change of policy to allow local authorities to assist refused asylum seekers at risk of destitution and provide emergency provision to them as they would to any other homeless person.
- 5) Endorse the call of the Children's Society for reform of asylum seeker support systems.
- 6) Join the national campaign, Still Human Here, a group of organisations proposing