

NOTICE OF MOTION	Date of Council Meeting: 10 th September 2025
	Mover: Cllr Z Collingham
	Seconder: Cllr Bacon
	Title of Motion: Listen to Local Communities on Migrant Accommodation

The Council notes:

2025 has been the worst year ever for small boat crossings, with over 25,000 people crossing the Channel this year alone. Since July 2024, over 50,000 people have crossed the Channel.

The increasing pressures faced by local communities, both across the country and recently in Rotherham, where hotels are designated for use as migrant accommodation without proper consultation or local input.

The successful High Court judgment granting Epping Forest District Council a temporary injunction to prevent such use of the Bell Hotel, and the current uncertainty as to whether this use can be lawful.

The need to balance the interests of migrants needing to be accommodated nationally alongside the wellbeing and concerns of local residents, including in relation to the public benefits available to asylum seekers placed in Rotherham.

The Council believes:

That local communities must be properly consulted before significant decisions are made that impact local services, housing, and community cohesion.

That the use of local hotels as long-term accommodation for migrants is not a sustainable solution and places disproportionate pressures on local infrastructure and services.

That local councils, as the democratic voice of their communities, should have a say in how accommodation needs are managed and delivered.

That the public benefits available to asylum seekers from the Council must address their basic needs, rather than support leisure pursuits like dingy days out and gym sessions, if residents are to have confidence in the proper use of taxpayers' money.

This Council resolves:

1. To ask the Group Leaders to jointly write to the Home Office:
 - a. Expressing this Council's concerns about the past use of hotels in our area for migrant accommodation and to request full consultation with this Council on any future decisions.
 - b. Requesting immediate action from the Government to address the impact of illegal migrants and asylum seekers on our communities, including:
 - reviewing current asylum seeker housing placements in the authority.
 - deporting failed asylum seekers and illegal immigrants without lawful reason to remain.
 - further increasing funding for the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal to speed up claim determinations.
 - developing a sustainable, properly planned, and community consulted approach to housing migrants, that considers alternatives to hotels such as immigration centres and former or repurposed MOD sites.
 - c. Requesting uniform national guidelines on asylum seeker benefits that focus such support on essential need, and not on providing leisure opportunities that exceed those available to low-income working residents.
2. To ask the three Members of Parliament representing parts of Rotherham Borough to co-sign a letter to the Home Secretary and Justice Secretary supporting the above measures.
3. To ask the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's legal team, to review the Council's readiness to seek an injunction to prevent the use of local hotels for migrant accommodation in future, should this be proposed before the legality of this use is determined.
4. To review any available data on the use of the Rothercard scheme in relation to the uses cited by The Sun newspaper on 10th August 2025 and refer this data to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) for them to consider whether any amendment should be made to the Rothercard scheme to restore public confidence.