

Council: 4 April 2017

Agenda item 15.4 –Administration amendment in the name of Councillor Daniel Thomas

Opposition Motion in the name of Cllr Barry Rawlings: Standing up for the right of Barnet's EU citizens to stay in the UK

Delete all and replace with the following:

Barnet has around 40,000 EU citizens who have made their home in the borough.

Many of these EU citizens have lived in Barnet for most of their lives. They contribute to the local economy and the local community, and help make our borough the diverse place it is. They would be a significant loss to Barnet in the unlikely event they were forced to leave.

There are also around 900,000 British citizens living in the EU, many of whom will be from Barnet, who have received no assurances from European Union officials or European heads of government on their status following Britain's exit from the EU.

Council notes that on 17th January 2017, the Prime Minister set out twelve principles to guide the UK's Brexit negotiations. One of those principles stated:

"Fairness demands that we deal with another issue as soon as possible too. We want to guarantee the rights of EU citizens who are already living in Britain, and the rights of British nationals in other member states, as early as we can.

"I have told other EU leaders that we could give people the certainty they want straight away, and reach such a deal now.

"Many of them favour such an agreement – 1 or 2 others do not – but I want everyone to know that it remains an important priority for Britain – and for many other member states – to resolve this challenge as soon as possible. Because it is the right and fair thing to do."

We agree with the sentiments expressed by the Prime Minister in her letter to European Council President Donald Tusk that:

"We should remember that at the heart of our talks are the interests of all our citizens. There are, for example, many citizens of the remaining member states living in the United Kingdom, and UK citizens living elsewhere in the European Union, and we should aim to strike an early agreement about their rights."

This Council recognises it is in the mutual interests of all parties to come to such an agreement, and that it would be reassuring both to EU citizens living in the borough, as well to Barnet families whose loved ones live in the EU.

We ask the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to jointly write to the Prime Minister expressing support for her aim to guarantee the rights of both UK and EU citizens early in the Article 50 negotiations.