

Motion to: Council

12 March 2024

Subject: Multi-faith working

Proposer: Councillor Jones

Seconder: Councillor Padda

Norwich has a proud and positive history of welcoming people to the city, which also includes creating an environment in which people of all faiths can practice without fear or persecution. As far back as the 14th century, Norwich became home to those fleeing religious persecution and today as a City of Sanctuary we are proud to continue to welcome those escaping persecution.

But sadly, recent years has seen a rise of politics of the hate, with far-right groups fuelling fear. We must take every opportunity to challenge this within our city, celebrating the benefits that come from diversity and the important role different faiths play in our city.

Religious or faith-based hatred is one of the most common motivations for hate crimes in the UK. As recent as 2022/23 religious hate crime reported to the police has more than doubled. As hate crimes increase and religious divisions heighten, there has never been a more important time to ensure that we elected members are listening and responding to all faith groups in our city.

There is no space for hate crime of any form in our city and as elected members and leaders in our community, it is crucial that we reject this in all forms. As elected representatives, we should actively engage in promoting community cohesion and engaging inclusively with all faith groups in our city and in doing so, gaining a better understanding of the challenges they face.

Council **RESOLVES** to

- 1) Invite representatives of the city's diverse faith groups to a multi-faith working group to collaborate with the council on:
 - a) supporting its engagement with members of faith groups throughout the city
 - b) better understanding the challenges faced by faith communities in our city.
 - c) promoting community cohesion across the city

- 2) Work collaboratively with religious or faith representatives to explore opportunities to support and share the celebration of faith-based festivals, recognising the diversity of faith groups in the city and their contribution.
- 3) To explore other forums where the city council can engage with all faiths in the city and continue to work with local faith partners, networks, and forums, aligning this with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan when next agreed by the council.