

Motions

Lead Member: All

Division and Local Member: All

Lead Officer: David Clark – Monitoring Officer

Author: Mike Bryant - Service Manager – Democratic Services

Contact Details: democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk / 01823 357628

A. Motion on the Plight of the Ukrainian People

The following motion will be proposed by Cllr Mark Healey and seconded by Cllr Henry Hobhouse:

Full Council:

- Notes that as a result of the ongoing conflict over 1 million Ukrainians have been forced to leave the country fleeing the conflict, and that many of those people who have remained in the country are facing a humanitarian crisis.
- Stands in solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people against Putin's illegal invasion along with their friends and relatives here in Somerset.
- Notes Somersets proud record of supporting refugees fleeing from Afghanistan, Syria and many other conflicts, helping them to settle in Somerset.

Full Council therefore will:

- Continue to provide support locally to Ukrainian refugees, working in collaboration with the local voluntary and community sector.
- Call on Government to continue to provide essential aid to Ukraine by sending a letter to the Prime Minister from the Chair of Council.

May I respectfully ask for all councillors to vote in favour in supporting this motion, and to show this council's ongoing support for our fellow human beings, against a tyrant regime.

B. Motion relating to a Council Property Investment

The following motion will be proposed by Cllr Brian Smedley and seconded by Cllr Shane Collins:

Full Council:

Notes that in the light of calls for an end of UK Arms sales to Israel, Somerset Council should review its interest in the Aztec West property in its portfolio with a view to immediately disposing of the property or securing a means to legally evict the tenant Elbit who are a major UK based provider of weapons to the Israeli Defence Forces used in the current Gaza catastrophe.

Therefore:

- Somerset Council should in future ensure that moral and ethical considerations assume equal weight to financial advantage in its property investments.
- Somerset Council should further donate the profit from Aztec West and Elbit to United Nations Relief and Works Agency, until the building is sold or until Elbit leave.

Supplemental Note 26 April 2024:

On 23 April 2024, Somerset Council voted on a motion in respect of a commercial investment property it owns at 600 Aztec West. That motion included a statement that “*the tenant Elbit UK [is] a major UK based provider of weapons to the Israeli Defence Forces, used in the current Gaza catastrophe*”.

Elbit Systems UK Limited have contacted us to say this is factually incorrect and they do not supply weapons or military equipment to the Israeli Defence Forces or the Israeli Ministry of Defence.

The Council would like to apologise and withdraw the statement that Elbit Systems UK Limited supplies military equipment to the Israeli Defence Forces or the Israeli Ministry of Defence.