

## Green Party Motion to Burnley Council

### Human Rights violations against the LGBTIQ+ community in Poland

#### **This Council notes:**

- The Polish population of Burnley is at least 740<sup>1</sup> as at March 2020.
- In the 1970s, Burnley was the UK's battleground for gay and lesbian rights, with two ground-breaking public struggles at either end of the decade. The first was a transformative public meeting held at Burnley Central Library in 1971. The meeting was about the right to open the first ever LGBT centre in old Co-Operative Society premises. The second was as a result of the political activism of Mary Winter, a bus driver sacked for nothing more than wearing a 'Lesbian Liberation' badge and unsupported by her trade union. She fought back against her employers in 1978 using a network of women's groups across the UK, and staging a demo outside the Burnley Bus Station. These links to LGBTIQ+ activism prompted two plays to be made in 2017.<sup>2</sup>
- Since 2019, 100 Polish Local Government areas, which cover about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Poland, have declared themselves "LGBT-free" zones and in passing such resolutions used aggressive, dehumanising and hate filled language against the LGBTIQ+ community.<sup>3</sup>
- Peaceful Pride marches have been met with violence from far-right groups.<sup>4</sup>

#### **This Council believes:**

- That, following re-election of President Duda who used anti-LGBTIQ+ rhetoric as his central campaign pledge, that the Human Rights of the Polish LGBTIQ+ community will be further threatened.<sup>5</sup>
- Hate and violence against the LGBTIQ+ community is unacceptable in all forms and should be called out and addressed.

#### **Therefore, this Council agrees:**

- To send a letter to the Burnley MP, the Prime Minister of the UK Government and the President of the European Commission to call on them to do whatever they can to speak out against this injustice and support whatever international sanctions are necessary to ensure that the Polish Government recognises that it must uphold the Human Rights of the LGBTIQ+ community to the fullest extent.

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<sup>1</sup> As of March 2020 740 Polish Nationals had registered for settled status under the EU settlement scheme

<sup>2</sup> <https://lancslgbt.org.uk/2017/01/31/burnley-lgbt-plays/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/16/dutch-city-ends-ties-with-polish-twin-declared-gay-free-zone-nieuwegein-pulawy>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7269879/Police-detain-25-people-far-right-attacks-LGBT-activists-Bialystok-Poland-Pride.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://metro.co.uk/2020/07/13/polands-anti-lgbt-president-course-second-term-knife-edge-vote-12982198/>