

MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council



Plymouth City Council To Treat Care Experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic

Plymouth City Council recognises:

- Every elected member and employee of this Council is a corporate parent to the children and care leavers in our care.
- We are all responsible for providing the best possible care, safeguarding and outcomes for the children who are looked after by us.
- That Councils have a duty to put the needs of vulnerable people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.

Plymouth City Council notes:

- A UCL study which showed 70% of care experienced people die early. Over 50% of people who are in custody up to the age of 21 have been in care (Become Charity) and a quarter of the homeless population is care experienced (The Independent Review of Children's Social Care).
- The Government commissioned an independent national review of children's social care, chaired by Josh MacAlister, and one recommendation was to look at making care experience an additional protected characteristic; another was that all public bodies become corporate parents.
- That the Government has not responded to the independent review.

Plymouth City Council believes:

- Our children in care and those who have left care have the right to expect everything from a corporate parent that would be expected from a good and responsible parent. This includes how families continue their support, care, and ambition for their children after they leave home and gain independence including through employment opportunities.
- This authority has already taken important steps to support our care experienced children and care leavers better such as our work on the Care Leavers' Covenant but we can always do more.
- That we cannot wait until the government decides which recommendations to implement and therefore, here in Plymouth, we should act to be the best corporate parents we can be.
- That when making any decisions in relation to our policies or formulating our Corporate Plan that we should recognise care experienced people as a vulnerable group who face discrimination.
- That whilst we cannot change national legislation we can use our powers to ensure that the Council consider care experienced people as part of its decision making in order to seek to prevent discrimination and improve life chances, in doing this. This will mean that we treat people with care experience the same as those with a protected characteristic.

Plymouth City Council therefore resolves:

- I. That the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer ensure that all council making decision documentation has in it appropriate sections to allow for the impact upon 'care experienced people' to be considered in decision making, where relevant and that:

- a. officers consider how information might be captured and reported upon in a similar way to that of the Public Sector Equality Duty Annual report; and
 - b. any publication of information relating to people who share a Protected Characteristic also includes 'care experienced people'
2. To proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people of all ages when developing new Council policies and plans and, where possible, those where the Council produces them in partnership with others.
 3. To request that the Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, explore with the Director of HR how the Council could seek to guarantee all care experienced persons an interview where they meet the essential criteria of the post applied for.
 4. That the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People writes to all public bodies represented in the City, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses in Plymouth to make them aware of this motion and, where possible and within available resources, offer training on corporate parenting and issues facing care experienced people and to work with our partners and our care experienced population to understand what corporate parenting means for them.
 5. That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Homes and Communities writes to Plymouth's MPs making them aware of this motion and asking them to press government to amend the law to include Care Experienced persons as a Protected Characteristic and for the extension of Corporate Parenting to all public bodies, following the recommendations of the MacAlister Report.
 6. That the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer attend the first Corporate Parenting Committee meeting in the next municipal year to report on the actions taken as a result of this motion on notice.

Proposed by: Councillor Jemima Laing

Signature:

Seconded by: Councillor Dylan Tippetts

Signature