

MOTION ON NOTICE



Date of Council Meeting: 18 September 2023

Title of Motion: Motor neurone disease (MND)

Motion Narrative and Action Required:

In June of this year I was contacted by a St Budeaux resident called Steve Wharton. Steve contacted me through his carer and was hoping I could help him raise awareness of an illness he had been diagnosed with called Motor Neurone Disease. In 2020, shortly after the birth of his second child, Steve started to walk with a limp and experienced weakness in his leg. Just 9 months later Steve was given the devastating news that he had MND. Just 18 months after being given this news Steve was left unable to speak and confined to his bed.

Few diseases are as devastating as Motor Neurone Disease. It is a rapidly progressing disease of the brain and central nervous system, which attacks the nerves that control movement so that muscles no longer work. This leaves people who live with MND trapped in a failing body, unable to move, swallow, and ultimately breathe.

A newer and more recent challenge for people living with MND has been the cost of living crisis. The Motor Neurone Disease Association recently produced a report that states that people living with MND have been disproportionately affected by the cost of living crisis. The many and numerous pieces of assistive equipment that is needed to keep MND sufferers alive are all run by electricity and the recent increases in electricity prices is causing many sufferers to rely on financial support grants. It is believed that families managing advanced MND can spend £800 - £900 a month on electricity for assistive equipment.

Council is therefore requested to;

1. ask the Leader to write to the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation and the Minister for Health and Secondary Care to request increased funding for MND research and to support the raising of awareness for this condition.
2. ask the Leader to write to the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work to implement more targeted energy support for households affected by MND.
3. to request Plymouth City Council to review its policy regarding how people who are housebound are able to access the council's democratic processes.
4. to make Steve Wharton the Plymouth City Council Champion for those living with MND so he can work with the council to help raise awareness of this condition.

Proposer: Cllr Jon Dingle

Seconder: Cllr Sally Haydon