

Motions to Council 24 May 2023

Chief Executive's accompanying notes

Motion 916

Gloucestershire biodiversity week

Proposed: Cllr David Gray

Seconded: Cllr Chloe Turner

In 2019, this council declared a climate change emergency and committed to a carbon action plan. We believe that in addition to reducing our carbon outputs, ensuring the resilience of our ecosystem is essential to maintaining a healthy planet.

Council notes:

- Biodiversity is essential for keeping our county's unique and beautiful wildlife healthy, sustainable, and productive.
- Biodiversity is relevant to many Council services and functions, such as planning, highways and land/property management.
- Tenants in our rural estates are already leading the way in ecological and biodiverse innovation.
- The new obligations given to the county council under the Environment Act 2021. Specifically:
 - The introduction of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, for which the county council is the lead authority.
 - The requirement for a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gains from all new development from 2023.
- The county council is a member of Climate Leadership Gloucestershire which has identified biodiversity as well as food and farming as two of its strategic thematic priorities.

Therefore, Council resolves to:

- Pass a declaration recognising the importance of biodiversity and committing all council decisions to give

	<p>the same level of consideration to biodiversity as carbon when determining environmental impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Cabinet to commit the Council to Hosting a Gloucestershire biodiversity week in which we can actively promote ways in which residents, schools, businesses and Parish and Town councils can get involved to help maintaining the biodiversity of our county. <p>We in turn commit to lead by example and follow good biodiversity practices when choosing our Highways Local schemes, supporting Parish and Town councils and other community groups. We also endeavour to pursue a biodiversity net gain on council land wherever possible, including opportunities for offsetting credits for supply to developers under the Gloucestershire Climate and Nature Fund. To emphasise the importance biodiversity in our corporate decision making, we will include ecological impact assessments alongside climate change implications assessments in cabinet reports.</p>
Climate change implications	Actions to protect and enhance biodiversity will help mitigate against climate change through carbon sequestration and will also help the county to adapt to climate change by reducing the effects of heating and flooding.
Resource implications	The resources needed to produce ecological impact assessments will need to be funded from existing budgets. Any longer term resource and funding implications arising from the motion will be subject to the Council's usual budget setting process.
Human rights implications	No implications arising from this motion.
Other implications relating to Council's policy framework	No implications arising from this motion.
Motion 917	

Gloucestershire County Council to enshrine being a Care Leaver as a Protected Characteristic

Proposed: Cllr Rebecca Halifax

Seconder: Cllr Ben Evans

This Council Notes:

1. The Independent Review of Children's Social Care, published in May 2022 (The "Macalister review"), recognised the often negative outcomes for people with care experience and recommended that the government should make 'Care Experienced' a protected characteristic.
2. That there is a range of barriers and discrimination care leavers can face throughout life, including but not limited to:
 - a. 70% of people who have been in care die earlier than would otherwise be expected
 - b. Over half of those in custody up to the age of 21 have been in care
 - c. A quarter of the homeless population in England and Wales has experienced of the care system.
3. That many care experienced people in Gloucestershire are among the most resilient and intelligent in the County, and that as corporate parents we should be nurturing and supporting their talents and potential
4. Care experienced young people can face additional barriers in fulfilling their potential such as having moved multiple times, and the services supporting them face considerable pressures.
5. The introduction of the Equality Act in 2010, enshrining 'protected characteristics' and outlawing discrimination on the basis of these characteristics
6. The passing of a Motion or policy to consider 'care experience' or being a 'care leaver' as a protected characteristic at other local authorities, including Blackburn, Cumberland and Sutton.

This Council Believes

1. Care leavers often face societal barriers, discrimination and poorer life outcomes than their peers
2. These impacts mean it would be appropriate to treat those with 'care experience' as having a protected characteristic in relation to access to the range of Council services
3. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination,

harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.

4. We can play a role, both directly and through the Local Government Association (LGA), in calling for care experience to be included in future revisions of the Equalities Act.
5. Although what is included in the national legal definition is determined through the Westminster Parliament, as a Council we can adopt this as part of our own practices now
6. As corporate parents, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to support the best possible outcomes for our children
7. Councillors should be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society
8. In addition to considering care experience as a protected characteristic, where possible as a Council we should look to take additional steps to support our care leavers and level the playing field in relation to their future opportunities and outcomes

This Council Resolves

1. That future decisions made and policies adopted by the council should be assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.
2. That in the delivery of the public sector equality duty the council includes care experience in the publication and review of equality objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a protected characteristic in services and employment
3. That this council will treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic
4. To write to and formally call upon other Councils within Gloucestershire to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation
5. Consider the viability of Council tax-exemption for our care-leavers being introduced from the 2024-25 Budget onwards
6. To explore options for making grants available for 16-19 year old care-experienced young people to access support to access educational or training opportunities (for example support with the cost of bus travel) to be

	<p>funded in the County council Budget from 2024-25 onwards.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. To call on Cabinet to lead on facilitating an awareness campaign in the County about the discrimination care leavers can face, and promoting the potential of our care leavers 8. To call on Cabinet to direct our economic development team to work with the LEP, Sixth Forms, Colleges, local apprenticeship providers and local employers to incentive local businesses who find employment opportunities for our care leavers and to help ensure our care leavers are in meaningful education, employment or training up to the age of 19. 9. To call on Cabinet to direct Children’s Services to undertake some work on ensuring that the needs of care-leavers are given the appropriate priority within our assessments of and support offered for SEND. 10. To request that the NHS locally to undertake a similar piece of work in regards to access to CAMHS, reporting back through the joint boards that operate between all the local health partners.
Climate change implications	None arising from this motion
Resource implications	The financial impact of giving care leavers Council Tax exemption, making grants for care leavers to access educational or training opportunities and the other recommendations will need to be quantified and included as proposals in the 2024/25 budget setting process.
Human rights implications	None arising from this motion
Other implications relating to Council’s policy framework	Officers are currently reviewing the template and guidance that is used for Equality Impact Assessments, so any changes arising from this motion will be incorporated into that review.
Motion 918	<p>The future of Community Meals services</p> <p>Proposed by: Cllr John Bloxsom</p> <p>Seconded by: Cllr David Drew</p> <p>Council recognises and values the county council’s Community Meals service which has been an essential service enabling older people and vulnerable adults to maintain or regain their</p>

	<p>independence and remain living in their own home for as long as possible.</p> <p>This includes those who have just come out of hospital or need extra support to prepare a hot meal for a short period of time or who may need help longer term with preparing hot meals and may also need other support from adult social care.</p> <p>We note that the countywide service delivered by the previous provider failed with no bids. We commend the work of staff, who at short notice, contacted recipients, carers, and family members to seek to put alternative arrangements in place.</p> <p>Council notes, however, that there are now reported to be just 60 users of the County funded service whereas there were stated to have been 481 recipients of the GCC funded service at the time when the tender failed in December 2022.</p> <p>Council further notes that there are a range of providers have been engaged on short contracts of between six and 12 months and that these include local charities, local community interest companies and local small businesses.</p> <p>Council believes the service should meet the needs of recipients across Gloucestershire, be procured and funded on a sustainable basis, and to that end Council asks that the Scrutiny Committee to continue to receive updates.</p> <p>We welcome an examination of the lessons learned for how the Council procures community meals and requests that the report, prepared for the Adult’s Cabinet Members, with recommendations for how we procure community meals moving forward, be shared with the Scrutiny Committee.</p>
Climate change implications	None arising from this motion
Resource implications	The financial implications will not be known until a detailed service specification for the service going forward has been agreed upon and costed. Any costs above existing budgets will need to be included in a future MTFS process.

Human rights implications	None arising from this motion
Other implications relating to Council's policy framework	None arising from this motion