

COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM No. 12
22 MARCH 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

The following notice of motion has been received in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders:

1. Motion from Councillor Dennis Jones

“The intimidation and abuse of councillors, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy; preventing elected members from representing the communities they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public life in democratic processes.

This council notes that increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse is having a detrimental impact of local democracy and that prevention, support and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians must improve to ensure councillors feel safe and able to continue representing their residents.

This council therefore commits to challenge the normalisation of abuse against councillors and officers and uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does. The council further agrees to sign up to the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation.

In addition, this council resolves to:

- **Write to the local Member of Parliament to ask them to support the campaign**
- **Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians**
- **Regularly review the support available to councillors in relation to abuse and intimidation and councillor safety**
- **Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals, like MPs.**
- **Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers”**

2. Motion with Major Implications from Councillor Sandra Bond

“This Council recognises the difficult situations faced by care leavers in the city, who can face significant barriers after they leave local authority care. This can include struggling to cope with independent living, placing them at heightened risk of social isolation, homelessness, and unemployment.

Although Care Leavers have access to benefits, as the cost of living has increased, so have their struggles to access independent living.

Exempting care leavers from paying council tax would aid their access to independent living by having a home that they can call their own.

This Council resolves to:

- **Exempt all care leavers from paying council tax.”**

Briefing Note from the Executive Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer and Interim Executive Director for Children Services (Statutory DCS)

The Council has powers under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to amend the local offer to care leavers which could include changes to the Council tax payable. The Council as billing authority also has power under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable by care leavers, including reducing it to nil. Officers will undertake an assessment of the options available for the financial year 2024/25, which will include an assessment of the financial implications of the options and prepare a report for submission to the Corporate Parenting Committee for consideration.

Our current council tax support discretionary hardship scheme includes the wording 'priority will be given to those applicants who are under the age of 22 (to be increased to 25) and were formally in social services care under section 20 or 31(1)(a) of the Children Act 1989.'

To our knowledge no applications have been refused from a care leaver.