

Motion to Council: Supporting Women Councillors

Proposed by Mr Steven Lambert

Seconded by Julia Wassell

This Council recognises the important work undertaken by The Fawcett Society in preparing the report 'Does Local Government work for women?', published in July 2017, as part of the Women in Local Government Commission, and acknowledges its findings over the barriers still faced by women in Local Government.

<https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/does-local-government-work-for-women-final-report-of-the-local-government-commission>

This Council acknowledges that research from across the private sector routinely demonstrates that more diverse teams, including teams with a more even share of women perform more effectively than teams which are homogenous; and that more inclusive Councils containing a more representative set of voices are better equipped to represent the population as a whole.

This Council is supportive of the report's recommendations that local authorities should seek to:

- support parent and carers in Councils by introducing a formal maternity, paternity and adoption policy for councillors, and ensuring care costs are covered;
- tackle sexism by setting out acceptable behaviour standards for councillors and driving cultural change;
- make our council more diverse by breaking down barriers faced by underrepresented groups;
- Support women's progression within the Council by proactively seeking out women councillors for leadership roles.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- **Ask officers to prepare a report for the Member Development Working Group on the adequacy of support available to Women Members when affected by barriers outlined in the Fawcett Society report,**
- **Ask the Monitoring Officer to review the current code of conduct to ensure incidences of harassment and discrimination are dealt with, with appropriate force, and for a report to be provided to the Regulatory & Audit Committee on any proposed changes to the Council's Constitution to put forward to full Council**
- **Ask the Head of Member Services to draft a proposed policy on a formal maternity, paternity and adoption policy for Councillors for consideration by the Regulatory & Audit Committee, as well as for consideration by the Independent Remuneration Panel in regard to changes to any possible change in allowances.**
- **Ask the County Returning Officer to consider what actions can be taken to encourage women to stand for election, and to report back to Council.**