

# **MOTIONS AGREED AT CITY COUNCIL – 6 NOVEMBER, 2018**

## **FORWARD TOGETHER TO BUILD A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CITY FOR EVERYONE: A COMMUNITY COHESION STRATEGY FOR BIRMINGHAM**

### **RESOLVED:-**

That the City Council:

- Adopt the Community Cohesion Strategy for Birmingham as set out at Appendix 1.
- Note city partners have been invited to adopt the Strategy as the city's approach to community cohesion.

## **WOMEN & DEMOCRACY**

### **RESOLVED:-**

- A. That the attached Statement of Intent is agreed;
- B. That Cabinet Members and named officers are asked to implement the action plan included within the report in order to tackle the many barriers to women's representation in Local Government;
- C. Add the following to action plan:-

Noting the small proportion of women representing the new single member wards, to lobby the Boundary Commission for a further review of city wards to tackle this issue.

## **MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

### **FIRST MOTION**

### **RESOLVED:-**

This Council notes that:

- 42% of children in Birmingham are living in poverty;
- The Trussell Trust reports a 40.6% increase in demand at its Birmingham food banks from September 2017 to September 2018;
- A survey undertaken by Plan International UK last year found that 1 in 10 teenage girls had been unable to afford sanitary products;
- 56% of teenage girls said they would rather be bullied at school than talk to their parents about periods;
- This is particularly problematic for girls from low-income families who see their parents struggling to make ends meet and feel reluctant to ask them to add sanitary products to the weekly shop;
- In many cases, as a result, they may lose a significant number of days of schooling or be unable to take part in all school activities;

- In his recent damning report on the impacts of austerity in the United Kingdom, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston concluded that 'Women are particularly affected by poverty.' One of the consequences of this has been an increase in period poverty and regrettably, even women in low-income employment are sometimes unable to afford good quality sanitary products when struggling to meet household bills and feed their families;
- In a country as well-off as Britain 'Period Poverty' is a scandal that should be ended.

This Council commends the:

- Scottish Government for its commitment to tackle 'Period Poverty' by introducing free sanitary products in all educational establishments;
- Project recently established by the charity Red Box who facilitate the distribution of sanitary products to students in need;
- Period poverty dignity campaigns launched by trade unions which are raising public awareness of period poverty.

This Council resolves to:

- Ask the Health and Well-Being Overview & Scrutiny Committee to work with relevant Cabinet Members, officers and partners to explore how sanitary products can be made available free of charge to female students in Birmingham's schools and colleges and to women employed in or visiting council run buildings;
- Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking the Government to provide the necessary funding to cover the cost of providing free sanitary products to girls and women in council workplaces, schools and colleges and scrap the VAT levied on female sanitary products as soon as is practicable and, in the meantime, to use the VAT collected on these products to fund the provision of free sanitary products for girls and women in need.

## **SECOND MOTION**

### **RESOLVED:-**

This Council welcomes the publication of the first UK wide veterans strategy by the UK, Welsh and Scottish Governments to support ex armed forces personnel with community and relationships, employment and skills, health and well-being, finance and debt, housing, and contact with the law.

This Council also welcomes the commitment of the West Midlands Combined Authority to closing the employment gap for veterans across the region via a new strand of the Mayor's Mentor Programme and a new scheme to harness the skills of veterans to become trainers in the construction industry.

This Council notes that, since signing the Armed Forces covenant in February 2012 with cross party support, the Council has embedded support to veterans within a number of key policies. However this Council believes that, with the publication of a new national strategy and in order to mark the

end of centenary commemorations of the Armistice it is timely to look again at how the Council supports veterans across the full range of its responsibilities as well as how it works with partners at a local and regional level to ensure the best possible care and support for those who have risked so much for our Country.

As such this Council calls for Scrutiny to examine with the Armed Forces Champions and reported back to Full Council to look at:

- How the Council currently supports veterans, including how successfully it is meeting its commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant and how this can be improved
- To look specifically at the current housing offer and how to ensure that this is addressing the need of veterans in the City
- How the Council currently works with partners to deliver support to veterans at a local and regional level and how this can be improved
- Identify any extra areas of support that the Council can provide either itself or in partnership through looking at best practice elsewhere and by engaging with veterans groups to see where more support may be beneficial
- Identify areas where we can help build better understanding amongst the wider community, especially younger people, by engaging with schools and youth groups such as the Scouts and Cadets
- Identify any areas where the council can constructively feedback to national government for policy changes or additional support to enable the Council to deliver the Government's aims and objectives for veterans at a local level.

In addition the Council also calls on the Executive, at the end of this Review, to write to all armed forces and key armed forces organisations (such as the Royal British Legion) setting out the Birmingham offer, along with details on how to access support to encourage full take up for all eligible individuals.

Council calls on the Government to put funding and resources in place to enable councils and other public bodies to comprehensively support veterans.

### **THIRD MOTION**

#### **RESOLVED:-**

This Council notes that:

- Birmingham City Council has approximately 64,000 Council homes.
- Birmingham City Council has recently built its 3,000<sup>th</sup> new council house since 2009.
- The city is undergoing a large amount of regeneration and building of new housing.

- Plans for regeneration projects such as in Druids Heath are seeing a reduction in the amount of council housing.
- The Mayor of London has introduced a requirement for all new regeneration projects to have a residents' ballot.
- The Birmingham Development Plan seeks to achieve 35% of affordable homes in all new developments of more than 15 dwellings.
- Residents on lower incomes are more likely to be reliant on local support networks and are less able to move to different areas.
- Birmingham City Council does not currently have a right to return or remain policy for residents but the executive have plans to introduce such a policy.
- Birmingham City Council does not currently give affected residents a vote on regeneration plans.
- Housing & Neighbourhoods Overview & Scrutiny Committee has agreed to do an enquiry into a right to return.

The Council recommends that the executive engages with scrutiny to review its policies for regeneration areas to ensure that:

1. Regeneration is planned to meet the City's housing need.
2. Residents living in a regeneration area have the opportunity to shape and influence plans.
3. The executive's proposed 'right to return' policy is comprehensive and balanced.
4. The implications of a residents ballot on regeneration projects is fully explored.