

MOTIONS RECEIVED FOR 12 MARCH 2024 FULL COUNCIL

GOLDEN MOTION (LABOUR): The Caring Economy

This Council notes:

- The UK is one of the most expensive countries in the world for childcare. Parents continue to face huge difficulties finding the right care for their children and their loved ones. Likewise, carers face a number of challenges because we undervalue caring at a cost to care workers.
- The West of England Combined Authority has adopted a local industrial strategy, and Bristol City Council is in the early stages of developing an economic strategy. Research has found that a 2% investment in care produces double the number of jobs for women and almost as many jobs for men as the same investment in construction We undervalue caring at the cost of those who may be cared for, those whose personal allowances and care package limitations fail to provide time for dignified interactions and the support they need. We undervalue caring at the cost of the planet: investing in the care sector could create 2.7 times as many jobs as the same investment in construction and produce 30% less greenhouse emissions.
- Following a campaign from Labour MPs, the Government now recognises childcare as a form of infrastructure, meaning the Community Infrastructure Levy could be spent on capital costs for childcare provision.

This Council believes:

- Further action needs to be taken to ensure that children across Bristol get the best start in life, regardless of the post-code and economic background they were born into.
- Early years intervention is crucial for improving life outcomes. The council and its partners should continue to prioritise the outcomes of Bristol's children and young people and embed their interests in all its work.
- Childcare remains far too expensive, and it is unacceptable that in 2024 2023, some parents are unable to go back to work due to childcare costs.
- Likewise, action needs to be taken to support carers, both through the council, through its partners, and throughout Bristol.
- Bristol needs a National Care Service introduced, that follows the principles outlined in the Fabian Society's pamphlet 'A National Care Service for all'

This Council resolves to:

- Call on members of the Strategy and Resources Committee to continue to protect maintained nurseries as a priority and reject any proposals to reduce funding for them in budgets put forward to Full Council in future. Furthermore, work alongside the Schools Forum to explore reforming the budget setting model by moving to a benchmarked model based on final summer term registrations from each September, giving nurseries the flexibility they need to maintain the best possible provision for our children. In addition, call on members of the committee to create a strategy using Bristol City Council assets to ensure provision is provided in the locations it is needed with a long-term city-wide plan.

Ensure all Bristol City Council employee contracts include paid time allowances and flexible working conditions to recognise and support those with caring responsibilities and childcare needs.

- Call on Party Group Leaders to lobby their national party leaders ~~write to the Government~~ to ask it recognises state nursery provision a statutory service and provide additional funding to local government to fund this, and lobby the Government to follow the lead of the Welsh Government and exempt nursery schools in Bristol from paying business rates.
- Call on the Children and Young People committee to explore other ways of making childcare more accessible in Bristol.
- Call on the new committee that will oversee strategic CIL ~~Mayor~~ to instruct appropriate officers to explore allocating future Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy raised in regeneration areas towards capital costs of ~~new~~ establishing new childcare centres and / or nursery schools.
- Call on the Mayor to request West of England Combined Authority explores options of using its investment fund to offer grants to new childcare providers and subsidise the salaries of new employees in the childcare sector. Should this not be viable, call on Party Group Leaders to lobby their national party group leaders ~~the Government~~ to do so and to also actively lobby all national party leaders to adopt the TUC strategy for the Care Workforce including: decent pay and conditions developed with those in the workforce, secure contracts, a minimum wage of £15 per hour, sick pay and pay for all hours worked; skills training and progressive pathways across the health, social care, education and early years sector. ~~with council officers supporting these efforts.~~
- Recognise and ensure childcare is articulated as infrastructure and have it included in local and strategic plans referenced as such in Bristol's upcoming economic strategy.

Lobby national leaders for investment in free early education, childcare and social care as economic infrastructure reinforcing the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.

- Call on the Mayor to instruct officers to adopt the asks of the Caring Economy campaign and request officers report back to Full Council on its progress in future.

Call on Party Group leaders to collectively write to all parties and ask them that should they form the next government, to ensure that they provide councils with sufficient resources to implement the National Care Service, in particular fair wages, more support for carers 'free for people with lifelong disabilities.' and ensuring 'Disabled and older people will have a new right to choose where they live' which will mean not taking costs of care into account during the assessment process.

Motion Submitted 29 February 2024

Proposed by Councillor Amal Ali

Notes:

1. Bristol Womens Voice Caring Economy Manifesto
<https://www.bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/caring-economy/caring-economy-and-local-government/>
2. TUC – A Strategy for the care workforce
<https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/strategy-care-workforce>