

Motion by Councillor Anderson

Foreword

I am putting this protected characteristic Motion to Council to be an addition to the brilliant work around "The Promise". This Motion is intended to help and support those who, because of circumstance beyond anyone's control, are unable to be helped as young people to reach their full potential. In the Scottish Borders we have some fantastic examples of Adults who are care experienced; they leave care supported and cared for. The work at Wheatlands is a shining example of good practice and they are to be commended.

However, over the years we also have those care experienced adults who didn't have the best outcome. As a parent we do not cut ties with our children once they reach 25. We continue to support and be a part of the support network to our grown children. As corporate parents we as a local authority, by agreeing to this Motion, say loud and clear, we will continue to give consideration to those who need extra support in life and acknowledge that in some cases 'Getting it Right for Every Child' means not forgetting them once they turn 25. By agreeing to acknowledge care experienced adults in this way, we can ensure a level of support that can help break the negative cycle some find themselves in. Learning is life long and I ask us to support the adults who learn later in life. Let's make the Scottish Borders the beacon of good practice. Let us be a corporate parent who when needed says, it's ok, we see you, and hold our hand out to help.

Protected Characteristics

Scottish Borders Council believes that Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives:

- Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.
- Care experienced people often face indirect discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.
- Care experienced people often face a postcode lottery of support Across the UK. However, we acknowledge the significant efforts of Scottish Borders Council to ensure this is minimised.
- As corporate parents, Councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an authority.
- All corporate parents should commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of looked after children and young people, and to consider their needs in any aspect of Council work.
- Councillors should be champions of our looked after children and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.

Scottish Borders Council therefore RESOLVES:

1. When making any decisions in relation to its policies, or formulating its Council Plan, that it recognises that Care Experienced people can and do face indirect and direct discrimination.

2. That it reaffirms its commitment to recognise that Scottish Borders Council has a duty to put the needs of vulnerable people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration, building upon and underpinning "The Promise".
3. To formally call upon all other bodies to treat care experience as a Protected Characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
4. For the Council to continue to proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views.
5. The Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer brings a report to Full Council on the barriers care experienced adults face by 26 January 2023.
6. The agreed Motion would take effect from the receipt of the above report on 26 January 2023, to acknowledge the time needed for Officers to enact the changes needed.
7. If the above report is later than 26 January 2023, that the Motion still takes effect from 26 January 2023.