

Motion for Council 24 September 2019 (Agenda Item 6)

Modernising the role of a councillor

This council notes:

- That analysis of the 2019 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 35% of councillors in England are women and only 20 (7%) councils reported having a parental leave policy in place for councillors
- The Local Government Association's 2018 census of local authority councillors found that 45% of councillors were retired, the average age was 59, and 36% of councillors had responsibilities as a carer (including children)
- That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors
- That parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender, and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt
- Digital technology provides opportunities to remove some of these barriers through remote working and voting

The council resolves:

- To adopt the parental leave policy drafted by the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce to give all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting (link to policy: <https://tinyurl.com/councilpl>)
- To use technology to allow councillors to attend meetings remotely and vote remotely where appropriate
- That North Somerset Council actively promotes the benefits of remote working to its staff and look at ways to improve take up.

Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly