

Disabled Workers Group Written Response to Cabinet Report - Flag Flying Protocol.

The Disabled Workers Group (DWG) chairs have been made aware of an additional meeting of the Cabinet which has been requested by the Leader on Thursday 12 June at 2.00pm to discuss the Protocol on Flag Flying. The DWG note that this is a single item agenda and that the Cabinet is recommended to consider whether it wishes to make any changes to the current protocol.

However, having reviewed the report contained within the agenda document pack, the DWG highlight that this contains the County Council's current protocol for flying flags at County Hall and does not include and suggested or recommended amendments. The DWG are highlighting that this does appear to align with County Council's core values of openness and transparency.

The DWG would stress that the existing protocol is the result of an agreement where significant interaction with the DWG was made prior to the final decision on the protocol. These meetings ensured that whilst the DWG did not necessarily agree with the policy and procedures, we were reassured of the support from the council for its disabled staff and service users. This open dialogue and willingness to engage with its staff networks facilitated a sense of honesty and trust, again aligning with the core values of the council and setting a positive precedent for relations between the council and its staff.

It is therefore disappointing that changes to the policy may occur without consultation with the staff networks, without prior knowledge or understanding of these changes before the meeting takes place. Though the flags provide a visible symbol to the public of the council's commitment, the converse is also important: the visible stripping of this symbol could send a message of decreasing support from the council to our staff members and to the public. This is important at a time of increasing uncertainty, during which we are looking for explicit, visible reassurance of the continued commitment of the council, its members and its staff to make disabled people of Leicestershire – and the council's workers – feel safe, supported, educated and uplifted.

Therefore, the DWG would request that should amendments be proposed to the policy during the Cabinet on the Thursday, 12 June 2025 at 2.00 pm, a formal consultation is conducted with the staff networks prior to any decisions being made.

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