

## Amendment to motion “Supporting Stockport residents through the ongoing cost of living crisis”

Amend the motion as below, inserting the text in green italics and deleting the text crossed out in red:

This Council notes that:

The ongoing cost of living crisis continues to impact Stockport residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Many of our residents are struggling to afford essential costs, such as food, housing, and energy bills.

This council is pleased to note an extension of The Household Support Scheme, which is a lifeline to many vulnerable Stockport residents *but regrets the new Labour government has chosen to only extend it for a limited period. This creates uncertainty and leaves councils unable to plan more effective use of these monies over the longer term. The fund has not increased to cover any additional pressures, such as the government’s decision to remove Winter Fuel Allowance from most pensioners, a move condemned by Age UK, just as fuel bills are expected to rise by 10%.* ~~However,~~ We believe more sustainable solutions are needed to tackle the cost of living crisis, including through a fairer, multiple year local government financial settlement within this parliament.

This council notes that the Winter Fuel Allowance *has been removed without a full and proper impact assessment and, while it is now a means tested allowance, the cut off is too low for vulnerable pensioners.* ~~and understands that although the government have upheld the triple lock pension, meaning a real terms uplift in pensioner income, there are still many pensioners who would remain entitled to the winter fuel allowance who are not claiming it.~~ In Stockport it is believed that over 3,300 residents are not claiming ~~this support~~ *pension credit* despite being eligible for it. [Source: Policy in Practice.] *In addition, 50,242 pensioners will be affected by this decision, meaning 89.80% of Stockport’s pensioners are no longer be able to claim the Winter Fuel Allowance. Many are vulnerable but are not entitled to pension credit, including those on universal benefits.*

This Council resolves to:

(1) Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call for the Government to *do full and proper impact assessments on such policy changes and spending cuts in future, including complying with the socio economic duty,* identify those pensioners who are eligible for pension credit and make the process easier *so councils can help those who need to apply.* ~~The council should then write to those who are eligible to encourage take-up. Council will also take the opportunity to acknowledge the extension of the household support scheme, which gives councils flexibility in terms of how it is spent to support cost of living pressures.~~

(2) Ensure ~~that while the government makes the necessary changes,~~ *that, given the government’s decision to cut Winter Fuel Allowance,* the council uses a broad comms strategy to continue to raise awareness of pension credit and encourage

greater uptake among eligible residents. This includes involving local elected members, who can support getting this message out to their residents.

*(3) Ask the Cabinet to do all it can to provide support for residents forced to choose between heating and eating this winter due to the government decision to remove this essential lifeline from most pensioners, and to continue to inform residents of schemes to improve efficiency of homes that they might be entitled to through existing grants and* inform the Cabinet that it is the view of this Council Meeting that it amend the Stockport Household Support Fund delivery plan to explicitly protect Stockport's most vulnerable pensioners through this winter period. This support should be provided in alignment with our trusted partners to ensure nobody falls through the cracks. It should also build on the work already done to support Pension Credit uptake through the Cost of Living Hub. Support for vulnerable pensioners should be easily accessible for those without computer access.

Moved by: Councillor Mark Roberts

Seconded by: Councillor Gary Lawson

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This council is pleased to note an extension of The Household Support Scheme, which is a lifeline to many vulnerable Stockport residents but regrets the new Labour government has chosen to only extend it for a limited period. This creates uncertainty and leaves councils unable to plan more effective use of these monies over the longer term. The fund has not increased to cover any additional pressures, such as the government’s decision to remove Winter Fuel Allowance from most pensioners, a move condemned by Age UK, just as fuel bills are expected to rise by 10%. We believe more sustainable solutions are needed to tackle the cost of living crisis, including through a fairer, multiple year local government financial settlement within this parliament.

This council notes that the Winter Fuel Allowance has been removed without a full and proper impact assessment and, while it is now a means tested allowance, the cut off is too low for vulnerable pensioners. In Stockport it is believed that over 3,300 residents are not claiming pension credit despite being eligible for it. [Source: Policy in Practice.] In addition, 50,242 pensioners will be affected by this decision, meaning 89.80% of Stockport’s pensioners are no longer be able to claim the Winter Fuel Allowance. Many are vulnerable but are not entitled to pension credit, including those on universal benefits.

This Council resolves to:

(1) Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call for the Government to do full and proper impact assessments on such policy changes and spending cuts in future, including complying with the socio economic duty, identify those pensioners who are eligible for pension credit and make the process easier so councils can help those who need to apply.

(2) Ensure that, given the government’s decision to cut Winter Fuel Allowance, the council uses a broad comms strategy to continue to raise awareness of pension credit and encourage greater uptake among eligible residents. This includes involving local elected members, who can support getting this message out to their residents.

(3) Ask the Cabinet to do all it can to provide support for residents forced to choose between heating and eating this winter due to the government decision to remove this essential lifeline from most pensioners, and to continue to inform residents of schemes to improve efficiency of homes that they might be entitled to through existing grants and inform the Cabinet that it is the view of this Council Meeting that it amend the Stockport Household Support Fund delivery plan to explicitly protect Stockport’s most vulnerable pensioners through this winter period. This support

should be provided in alignment with our trusted partners to ensure nobody falls through the cracks. It should also build on the work already done to support Pension Credit uptake through the Cost of Living Hub. Support for vulnerable pensioners should be easily accessible for those without computer access.

Moved by: Councillor Mark Roberts

Seconded by: Councillor Gary Lawson