



DATE: 17 September 2024
MY REF: RW/CCouncil
PLEASE ASK FOR: Mrs. R. Whitelaw
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Dear Sir/Madam

I summon you to the MEETING of the LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL to be held at COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD on WEDNESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2024 at 2.00 p.m. for the transaction of the business set out in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements.
2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 July 2024. (Pages 5 - 16)
3. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this agenda.
4. To answer questions asked under Standing Order 7(1)(2) and (5).
5. To receive position statements under Standing Order 8.

To consider reports of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Commission, Scrutiny Committees and other bodies:

6. Report of the Cabinet.
 - (a) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. (Pages 17 - 76)
7. Report of the Constitution Committee.



- (a) Appointment of Independent Persons. (Pages 77 - 82)
8. Report of the Corporate Governance Committee.
- (a) Changes to the Financial Procedure Rules. (Pages 83 - 92)
9. Appointments in accordance with item 11 of Standing Order 4:
- (a) To appoint such Cabinet Support Members as the Council considers appropriate.
10. To consider the following notice of motion:
- (a) Winter Fuel Payments - Mr M Mullaney CC
- (a) That this Council notes the recent announcement by the Labour Government to end universal winter fuel payments and restrict eligibility to only those in receipt of Pension Credits and other benefits.
- (b) That, though many agree that universal Winter Fuel Payments are not necessary, this Council is deeply concerned that many pensioners on lower and middle incomes will now not receive the payments, and that across England and Wales the number of people eligible for winter fuel payments will fall by 10 million (from 11.4 million to only 1.5 million).
- (c) That, in Leicestershire the number of pensioners affected by the change in eligibility criteria is 129,537, which means that 92.5% of pensioners currently eligible for winter fuel payments will no longer be able to claim the payment from this winter onwards.
- (d) That this Council believes that the Labour Government has set the threshold at which pensioners do not qualify for Winter Fuel Payments far too low. Only those receiving a pension of less than £218.15 a week (or £332.95 a week for couples) are eligible for pension credits. This is significantly lower than the living wage rate.
- (e) That this Council is also concerned by the low take up of pension credit with only 63% of those eligible nationwide receiving them – and over 880,000 pensioners not doing so. This Council recognises the role it has to play to increase awareness of benefits such as Pension Credit to ensure people are aware of the support they are entitled to.
- (f) That this Council further notes that the Energy Price Cap is due to rise by 10% in October, which combined by the removal of Winter Fuel Payments will push thousands of local pensioners into fuel poverty.

- (g) That this Council supports the criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this abrupt policy change and believes that decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and well-being of our most vulnerable older residents.
- (h) That, given the expected impact the withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Payment will have on vulnerable older people, and the analysis carried out by charities that 71% of disabled people will lose their entitlement, despite their greater dependence on heating their homes, this Council is deeply concerned that the Government did not carry out an impact assessment before putting the matter to a vote.
- (i) That this Council is also concerned that the government is suggesting the use of the Household Support Grant to fill the gap, diverting much-needed funding away from children receiving Free School Meals.
- (j) That this Council therefore resolves to:
 - (i) Request that the Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty.
 - (ii) Commit this Council to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK and write to all members offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves.
 - (iii) Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in Leicestershire are supported in claiming their entitlement.