

Notice of Motion

Cabinet

26 November 2024

Winter Fuel Payments

The Labour Government have announced the end of the universal winter fuel payments, restricting eligibility to only those in receipt of Pension Credits and other benefits.

Though many agree that universal Winter Fuel Payments are not necessary, it is deeply concerning that many pensioners on lower and middle incomes will now not receive the payments. 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).

In Torbay the number of pensioners set to lose the payment is 21127.

I and the motion supporter believe 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.

It is also of concern the low take up of pension credit with only 63% of those eligible nationwide receiving them – and over 880,000 pensioners not doing so. As a Community Leader the Council needs to recognise 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.

Furthermore, the Energy Price Cap has risen by 10% in October, which combined by the removal of Winter Fuel Payments will push thousands of local pensioners into fuel poverty.

Cabinet resolves to urgently request the Director of Adult and Community Services to commence a significant awareness campaign to maximise uptake of pension credits. This will include use of Council noticeboards, social media, promotion in local press and also targeted letters to those who may be eligible.

Promoter Councillor Long
Supporter Councillor Law