

## **Uttlesford District Council**

### **Full Council meeting 8 October 2024**

#### **Member Motion on Winter Fuel Payments for Pensioners**

To be proposed by Cllr Geoffrey Sell

Seconded by Cllr Alan Dean

#### **Council is resolved to:**

1. Note 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.
2. Note with concern that many pensioners on lower incomes will now not receive vital support with winter fuel costs. 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).
3. Note that in Uttlesford, the number of pensioners shows that 18052 people in Uttlesford received the payment last year.
4. 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.
5. Note with 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.
6. Recognise the importance of raising awareness of benefits, such as Pension Credit, to ensure people receive the support they are entitled to. Council welcomes the work being undertaken by the Council with Citizens Advice and Age UK, to promote the Pension Credit scheme to those who may be eligible, and also welcomes Government awareness campaigns, such as the Pension Credit Week of Action.
7. Further note that the Energy Price Cap is due to rise by 10% in October which, combined with the removal of Winter Fuel Payments, risks pushing thousands of local pensioners into fuel poverty

#### **Council is therefore resolved to:**

8. Ask the Leader of Council to write to the Government, calling for the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit receipt to be immediately

suspended and for a new threshold determining eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments to be adopted.

9. Ask the Leader of Council to write to all MPs covering the Uttlesford District Council area, asking them to give their formal support to halting the changes to the Winter Fuel Payment eligibility.