



## COUNCIL MEETING – 20 SEPTEMBER 2018

### PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO MOTION 2

#### MOTION 2: Council Tax Relief

Proposed amendment to be moved by Councillor Andy Hull

This council notes:

- That the Conservative government's local authority and welfare cuts have been an unprecedented and destructive attack on disabled people and society's poorest.
- That changes to disability benefits have affected disabled people's independence, well-being and security.
- That the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities described the behaviour of the Department for Work and Pensions as a "human catastrophe", violating the human rights of disabled people.
- That Universal Credit (UC) is being rolled out in Islington.
- That in UC trial areas, administrative errors have added, on average, an extra three weeks to the formal 35 day wait for an initial benefit payment.
- That, as revealed by a Freedom of Information request by the Observer Newspaper, one in three UC recipients are facing regular deductions from their benefit, because of having to pay back advance payments due to arrears in rent, council tax or utility bills.
- That Islington Council's Policy and Performance Committee is looking at the impact of UC on Islington residents, the council and other local services.

This council further notes:

- That in 2013 the Coalition government scrapped Council Tax Benefit and forced councils to implement their own council tax reduction schemes [whilst reducing the budget for them to do that by 10 per cent.](#)
- That whilst Islington Council has laudably implemented a council tax reduction scheme that is more generous than many other councils, still **many** [some](#) households are falling into arrears.
- [That Islington Council has a resident support scheme that provides targeted support to residents most in need. The scheme cost over £2 million in 2017/18 to administer and supported 4,570 residents.](#)
- [That other London councils have adopted different approaches to supporting their poorest residents.](#) In 2017 Camden Council decided to exempt the borough's poorest entirely from paying council tax, taking 12,000 households out of the tax, [although its local welfare scheme will be reduced over the next two years.](#)

- That Haringey Council, [under new administration](#), is looking to reform council tax, investing £1.6 million to exempt 6,000 of the poorest households from council tax.
- That Islington Council has exempted care leavers and foster carers from paying council tax, recognising that exempting certain groups from paying council tax is worthwhile.
- [That Islington Council continues to provide a £100 council tax reduction for older residents.](#)
- [The work of the Council in resisting the Government's abolition of local authorities' welfare provision funds, and preparing for the roll-out of UC in Islington.](#)

This council resolves:

- ~~To review the Council Tax exemption scheme, to see whether a similar scheme to those in Haringey and Camden could be rolled out in Islington in time for this year's budget.~~
- [To continue its practice of annually reviewing its council tax support scheme to explore how the Council can best support residents from the poorest households. This will include requiring any proposals to amend the council tax support scheme to be fully costed and funded.](#)

***The amended motion would read as follows:***

This council notes:

- That the Conservative government's local authority and welfare cuts have been an unprecedented and destructive attack on disabled people and society's poorest.
- That changes to disability benefits have affected disabled people's independence, well-being and security.
- That the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities described the behaviour of the Department for Work and Pensions as a "human catastrophe", violating the human rights of disabled people.
- That Universal Credit (UC) is being rolled out in Islington.
- That in UC trial areas, administrative errors have added, on average, an extra three weeks to the formal 35 day wait for an initial benefit payment.
- That, as revealed by a Freedom of Information request by the Observer Newspaper, one in three UC recipients are facing regular deductions from their benefit, because of having to pay back advance payments due to arrears in rent, council tax or utility bills.
- That Islington Council's Policy and Performance Committee is looking at the impact of UC on Islington residents, the council and other local services.

This council further notes:

- That in 2013 the Coalition government scrapped Council Tax Benefit and forced councils to implement their own council tax reduction schemes whilst reducing the budget for them to do that by 10 per cent.
- That whilst Islington Council has laudably implemented a council tax reduction scheme that is more generous than many other councils, still some households are falling into arrears.

- That Islington Council has a resident support scheme that provides targeted support to residents most in need. The scheme cost over £2 million in 2017/18 to administer and supported 4,570 residents.
- That other London councils have adopted different approaches to supporting their poorest residents. In 2017 Camden Council decided to exempt the borough's poorest entirely from paying council tax, taking 12,000 households out of the tax, although its local welfare scheme will be reduced over the next two years
- That Haringey Council, under new administration, is looking to reform council tax, investing £1.6 million to exempt 6,000 of the poorest households from council tax.
- That Islington Council has exempted care leavers and foster carers from paying council tax, recognising that exempting certain groups from paying council tax is worthwhile.
- That Islington Council continues to provide a £100 council tax reduction for older residents.
- The work of the Council in resisting the Government's abolition of local authorities' welfare provision funds, and preparing for the roll-out of UC in Islington.

This council resolves:

- To continue its practice of annually reviewing its council tax support scheme to explore how the Council can best support residents from the poorest households. This will include requiring any proposals to amend the council tax support scheme to be fully costed and funded.