

COUNCIL MEETING – 12 DECEMBER 2024

AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS

Proposed Amendment to Motion 1: Winter Fuel Allowance

Amendment moved by: Cllr Diarmaid Ward

This Council notes:

- With deep concern the removal of automatic Winter Fuel Payments for those not on mean-tested benefits. ~~Millions of Pensioners, including many in Islington, who should be on, or just miss out on qualifying, means-tested benefits are at risk as a result of this measure.~~
- Islington Council's campaign to save the Household Support Fund, which the Council has used to support low-income pensioners.
- The Labour government's commitment to provide £1 billion for the continuation of the Household Support Fund in the October 2024 budget.
- At the October 2024 Executive Meeting, Islington Council committed to helping pensioners who are not in receipt of pension credit but who are in receipt of other low-income benefits of housing benefit or council tax support with an award of £300.
- ~~That it is predicted that energy prices are set to rise and the change of policy could affect the health of two million pensioners (source: Age UK).~~
- The energy price cap will rise by 1% to £1,738 in the first quarter of 2025, and is expected to fall by 1% in the second quarter of 2025.
- Pensioners living in Islington are automatically eligible for the SHINE service whereby service users can get energy advice on how to reduce energy usage, food bank vouchers, fuel vouchers, water discounts, installation of small energy saving measures through the Energy Doctor service, access to retrofit grant schemes to install insulation measures (for owner occupiers and private rented sector) and boiler servicing and repairs (for low-income owner occupiers).
- The Council has provided financial support over the last three years to enable additional provision of warm spaces over the winter months.

- According to Caroline Abrahams CBE, Charity Director at Age UK: "We strongly oppose the means-testing of Winter Fuel Payment (WFP) because our initial estimate is that as many as two million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it and will be in trouble as a result – yet at the other end of the spectrum well-off older people will scarcely notice the difference – a social injustice."
- The winter fuel payment was introduced by the Labour government under Tony Blair's in 1997, and expanded to all pensioners from 2000. However, after the last 14 years of Tory austerity, the current Labour government has had to make difficult decisions to plug the ~~The reason given by this Labour government for removing automatic Winter Fuel Payments is a~~ £22bn funding black hole. ~~but HMRC has admitted it is unable to recover £19bn unpaid tax.~~
- The State of Equalities in Islington 2023 report, states that 34% of Islington's 60+ population are living in income deprived households. This is the 4th highest proportion of people over 60 living in income deprived households relative to all other London Boroughs and the 5th highest nationally.
- The Government has written to all pensioners in receipt of Housing Benefit who are potentially eligible for Pension Credit to encourage them to claim, something which the last Conservative government failed to do.
- The Labour Government has continued the Pension triple lock. The state pension also increased by £900 this year, and is set to increase by over £400 in 2025/26.

This Council further notes:

- That through the SHINE programme it has been endeavouring to reduce fuel poverty and help people stay warm and healthy. However, as the State of Equalities in Islington 2023 report states, "we know there is more we [the council] can do to support this highly valued group."
- The older persons discount on council tax bills which the council retained despite the financial challenges we face, meaning all pensioners receive a minimum £100 off their council tax bill.
- Despite The Labour government's difficult decision to end universal winter fuel payments, this council has been driving take up of pensioner benefits like pension credit for several years. Islington pensioner households claim £2.75m in pension credit, which increases to £3.7m of additional income when factoring in other benefits and awards helped to claim. ~~targeting of pensioners as unfair and unnecessary and strongly opposes the continuation of austerity.~~
- This year, the council piloted a data-driven Attendance Allowance campaign for pensioner households, resulting in 69 successful claims and an additional £320k in annual benefits. The estimated lifetime value of these claims is £2.1m, with more households being assisted.
- Our IMAX team helped residents claim £6.2m of annual benefits last financial year and this year we are on course to top that figure. This included supporting

878 pensioner households in 2023/24 and 1,302 pensioner households in 2024/25 to date.

This Council resolves to:

- ~~Request the Council Leader to w~~Write to the Government Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating the council's concern regarding the removal of Islington's strong belief that automatic Winter Fuel Payments and urge they should be reinstated, as soon as it is economically viable.
- ~~Ask the Council Leader to w~~Write to both all Islington MPs, asking them to commit their public support to a review of the reinstatement of the winter fuel payments where economically viable, and highlight the range of support provided by the council to continue support pensioners in low-income households who may be affected by the decision.
- Continue to Work to promote the take up of Pension Credit to Islington residents through our brilliant IMAX team ahead of the 21st December deadline.

The amended motion would read as follows:

Amended Motion 1: Winter Fuel Allowance

This Council notes:

- With deep concern the removal of automatic Winter Fuel Payments for those not on mean-tested benefits.
- Islington Council's campaign to save the Household Support Fund, which the Council has used to support low-income pensioners.
- The Labour government's commitment to provide £1 billion for the continuation of the Household Support Fund in the October 2024 budget.
- At the October 2024 Executive Meeting, Islington Council committed to helping pensioners who are not in receipt of pension credit but who are in receipt of other low-income benefits of housing benefit or council tax support with an award of £300.
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- The winter fuel payment was introduced by the Labour government under Tony Blair's in 1997, and expanded to all pensioners from 2000. However, after the last 14 years of Tory austerity, the current Labour government has had to make difficult decisions to plug the £22bn funding black hole.
- The State of Equalities in Islington 2023 report, states that 34% of Islington's 60+ population are living in income deprived households. This is the 4th highest proportion of people over 60 living in income deprived households relative to all other London Boroughs and the 5th highest nationally.
- The Government has written to all pensioners in receipt of Housing Benefit who are potentially eligible for Pension Credit to encourage them to claim, something which the last Conservative government failed to do.
- The Labour Government has continued the Pension triple lock. The state pension also increased by £900 this year, and is set to increase by over £400 in 2025/26.

This Council further notes:

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- The older persons discount on council tax bills which the council retained despite the financial challenges we face, meaning all pensioners receive a minimum £100 off their council tax bill.
- Despite The Labour government's difficult decision to end universal winter fuel payments, this council has been driving take up of pensioner benefits like pension credit for several years. Islington pensioner households claim £2.75m in pension credit, which increases to £3.7m of additional income when factoring in other benefits and awards helped to claim.
- This year, the council piloted a data-driven Attendance Allowance campaign for pensioner households, resulting in 69 successful claims and an additional £320k in annual benefits. The estimated lifetime value of these claims is £2.1m, with more households being assisted.
- Our IMAX team helped residents claim £6.2m of annual benefits last financial year and this year we are on course to top that figure. This included supporting 878 pensioner households in 2023/24 and 1,302 pensioner households in 2024/25 to date.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Government indicating the council's concern regarding the removal of automatic Winter Fuel Payments and urge they should be reinstated, as soon as it is economically viable.
 - Write to both Islington MPs, asking them to commit their public support to a review of the reinstatement of the winter fuel payments where economically viable, and highlight the range of support provided by the council to continue support pensioners in low-income households who may be affected by the decision.
 - Continue to promote the take up of Pension Credit to Islington residents through our brilliant IMAX team ahead of the 21st December deadline.
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Proposed Amendment to Motion 2 – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Amendment moved by: Cllr Rowena Champion

This Council notes:

- In June 2019, Islington Council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards a target of net zero carbon by 2030.
- ~~For 2022/2023 the average Islington household produced 350.1kg of waste every year, of which 27.7% is recycled, the lowest rate for fifteen years. Two thirds of all the carbon emissions relating to Islington residents and businesses, 1.4m tonnes, are related to the manufacture, transport, consumption and disposal of consumer goods outside Islington.~~
- For 2023/2024 the average Islington household produced 331.4kg of waste that was not recycled every year, Islington's lowest figure, and recycled 30.4%, which is better than the average for NLWA Boroughs and for all inner London Boroughs, but we can and should do better.
- Islington Council has a target of recycling 40 per cent of the household waste it collects and 75% of the commercial waste by 2030.
- Research from the LGA and YouGov found that 71 per cent of people believe supermarkets and retailers use too much packaging and that 85 per cent of people think companies should be required by Government to reduce the amount of packaging used.
- That our efforts to increase recycling rates and reduce waste have included a wide range of initiatives including a £2m investment in improving recycling on estates, making recycling sites more accessible, expansion of food waste collections to all purpose built blocks of flats, delivering a food waste recycling campaign, trials to improve recycling, including food waste, for flats above shops and a programme of community reuse and repair events.

This Council further notes:

- The Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will see manufacturers charged a levy for the cost of recovering packaging material from 2026, with a goal to reduce unnecessary packaging.
- That former Islington Labour Councillor, Mary Creagh, the new Environment Secretary, announced that the delivery of the EPR system will now be “co-produced” by producers and manufacturers.
- Lots of London boroughs have moved to ending weekly non-recyclable waste collections. ~~with Lambeth recently approving fortnightly collections to meet net zero targets.~~

- ~~The 15~~ Many London boroughs that have implemented fortnightly collections to meet targets set in the Mayor of London's environment strategy — which all London councils are signed up to — ~~saw~~ have seen increases in their recycling rates.
- Research and trials by WRAP have found that weekly separate food waste collections alongside fortnightly residual collections have been shown on average to collect more food waste than those aligned to weekly residual collections.
- That the Council introduced a scheme for charging for garden waste, for £75 a year.
- As a Labour-run Council we have implemented a Reduction and Recycling plan 2023-2025 to 'explore the feasibility of collecting residual waste fortnightly, with weekly collections of recycling, food and garden waste'.
- The Labour manifesto commitment, which outlined our pledge to invest in new recycling facilities on estates, which has seen 40 recycling site improvement projects since the 2022 election.

This Council resolves to:

- Explore the possibility to scope a trial for fortnightly collection of non-recyclable residual waste in selected neighbourhoods to measure impact on recycling and savings made.
 - ~~Work with the Local Government Association and request~~ Work with our new Labour Government to defend and strengthen the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, the Deposit Return Scheme, simpler recycling, a ban on disposable vapes, and developing a circular economy.
 - Work with the Local Government Association, NLWA and constituent Boroughs and request that as part of the government's commitment to moving towards a circular economy, EPR is expanded so that it creates economic incentives for producers to design out waste and use materials that are recyclable.
 - Publish a review on the ~~impact~~ implementation of a subscription service for ~~of charging for the collection of~~ green waste, including ~~green collection rates and unintended consequences like dumping and burning.~~ any proposals for improving the service.
 - Continue working with the Government to secure funding to fulfil the Islington Labour manifesto commitment to have food waste recycling services to all domestic properties provided by our Labour-run Council.
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The amended motion would read as follows:

Amended Motion 2 – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

This Council notes:

- In June 2019, Islington Council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards a target of net zero carbon by 2030.
- For 2023/2024 the average Islington household produced 331.4kg of waste that was not recycled every year, Islington's lowest figure, and recycled 30.4%, which is better than the average for NLWA Boroughs and for all inner London Boroughs, but we can and should do better.
- Islington Council has a target of recycling 40 per cent of the household waste it collects and 75% of the commercial waste by 2030.
- Research from the LGA and YouGov found that 71 per cent of people believe supermarkets and retailers use too much packaging and that 85 per cent of people think companies should be required by Government to reduce the amount of packaging used.
- That our efforts to increase recycling rates and reduce waste have included a wide range of initiatives including a £2m investment in improving recycling on estates, making recycling sites more accessible, expansion of food waste collections to all purpose built blocks of flats, delivering a food waste recycling campaign, trials to improve recycling, including food waste, for flats above shops and a programme of community reuse and repair events.

This Council further notes:

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- That former Islington Labour Councillor, Mary Creagh, the new Environment Secretary, announced that the delivery of the EPR system will now be “co-produced” by producers and manufacturers.
- Lots of London boroughs have moved to ending weekly non-recyclable waste collections.
- Many London boroughs that have implemented fortnightly collections to meet targets set in the Mayor of London's environment strategy — which all London councils are signed up to — have seen increases in their recycling rates.
- Research and trials by WRAP have found that weekly separate food waste collections alongside fortnightly residual collections have been shown on average to collect more food waste than those aligned to weekly residual collections.
- That the Council introduced a scheme for charging for garden waste, for £75 a year.

- As a Labour-run Council we have implemented a Reduction and Recycling plan 2023-2025 to 'explore the feasibility of collecting residual waste fortnightly, with weekly collections of recycling, food and garden waste'.
- The Labour manifesto commitment, which outlined our pledge to invest in new recycling facilities on estates, which has seen 40 recycling site improvement projects since the 2022 election.

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- Explore the possibility to scope a trial for fortnightly collection of non-recyclable residual waste in selected neighbourhoods to measure impact on recycling and savings made.
 - Work with our new Labour Government to defend and strengthen the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, the Deposit Return Scheme, simpler recycling, a ban on disposable vapes, and developing a circular economy.
 - Work with the Local Government Association, NLWA and constituent Boroughs and request that as part of the government's commitment to moving towards a circular economy, EPR is expanded so that it creates economic incentives for producers to design out waste and use materials that are recyclable.
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