

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

15 October 2024

Notice of Motion No. 2024-05 – Winter Fuel Payments

From Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall and Cllr Pauline Church

To consider the following motion submitted in accordance with the constitution:

Motion

This Council regrets the decision by the Labour Government to end universal Winter Fuel Payments for people of pension age. Wiltshire has more than 160,000 residents of pension age and the removal of the payment risks forcing many into fuel poverty this winter.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer MP denied that the Government carried out an impact assessment of the effect the cut would have on older people. However, on 13 September 2024 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) undermined Starmer's claim by publishing the Equality Analysis it carried out three months ago. The assessment found that disabled people in particular will be hit hardest by the cut.

In our commitment to supporting older Wiltshire residents, we recognise that many of pension age who are eligible for pension credits do not apply for them and as a result they will be financially worse off. The lack of awareness some Wiltshire residents may have concerning the process for obtaining pension credits could be improved through a dedicated communications campaign.

We therefore request that the Leader of the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves MP, urging a review of Labour's decision to end the Winter Fuel Payment. We also encourage officers to coordinate a social media and press campaign to show Wiltshire residents how to check their eligibility and register for pension credits.