

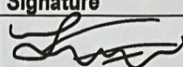
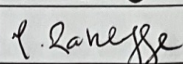
NOTICE OF MOTION

To be submitted to the meeting of Full Council to be held on:

Wednesday 23rd October 2024

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in accordance with Standing Order Number 6.

	Name (in capitals)	Signature
Proposer:	Cllr SIÂN DAVIDSON	
Seconder:	Cllr M RATAUFFE	

Motion: Changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance and protecting pensioners from fuel poverty

1. This Council Notes

- 1.1 The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.
- 1.2 The estimated impact of this decision, which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.
- 1.3 The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of Halton and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- 1.4 The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- 1.5 The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

2. This Council believes:

- 2.1 That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- 2.2 While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, 19,809 across Halton sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.
- 2.3 The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and wellbeing of our poorest older residents.