



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
16 March 2022
Agenda Item 15

Key Decision: [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All Worthing

Referral of Motion on Notice from Worthing Borough Council

Report by the Interim Director for Communities

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report sets out a motion (attached as Appendix 1) referred from the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on the 22nd February 2022.
- 1.2. Members of the Joint Strategic committee are asked to consider and determine the Motion.
- 1.3. Members can either support the motion and ask for further work to be carried out in this regard, or, members can reject the motion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion and determine how further work is carried out; or,
- 2.2. That the Joint Strategic Committee reject the motion.

3. Context

- 3.1. At its meeting on the 22nd February 2022, Worthing Borough Council received a motion from Councillor Cathy Glynn-Davies, seconded by Councillor Vicki Wells, details of which can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The motion submitted to Council contained subject matter that is within the remit of the Joint Strategic Committee, as defined in para 14.4.1 of the Council's Procedure Rules. Therefore, it was moved and seconded, immediately noted by the Council and referred without debate to the Joint Strategic Committee for consideration and determination.
- 3.3 Where a motion has been referred by Full Council to the Joint Strategic Committee, the mover, or the seconder in the absence of the mover, shall be entitled to attend the relevant meeting of the Executive and explain the motion. Councillor Cathy Glynn Davies has been made aware that the motion has been referred to this Committee.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The Joint Strategic Committee can either support or reject the motion.
- 4.2 Should the Joint Strategic Committee support the motion, then the Committee should ask Officers to prepare a further report on the substantive issues to be presented at a future meeting of the JSC.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There may be direct financial implications in future depending on the course of action the Joint Strategic Committee wishes to take.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Rules concerning motions are set out in the Council's Constitution under paragraph 14 of the Council's Procedure Rules.

Background Papers

Motion to Worthing Borough Council on the 22nd February 2022

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Appendix 1

Yesterday 3rd February, the Chancellor announced a £200 'rebate' on the cost of energy. The money on offer is a levy, not a rebate, and will need to be repaid as an extra charge on future bills. The New Economics Foundation have performed modelling which demonstrates that the poorest 10% of families will still be £450 worse off on average, even after the £150 Council Tax Rebate also announced yesterday. This ploy benefits the energy suppliers and maintains their profit margins.

Polly Toynbee, in The Guardian, points out that the Council Tax rebate 'does nothing more than shift the payment of this temporary relief to local authorities'. It may result in this Council having to agree a substantial increase in Council Tax charges in the next financial year, or cut services, already under pressure, to the bone.

I have been contacted by a resident incensed at this underhand ploy to put their household in debt to the Government. A petition has been created as follows:

'A loan towards the increase in fuel prices will put me in debt to this government. I do not have credit or loans and do not wish to be in debt to this government. Whilst this will obviously be a short-term fix for the millions of people who can't afford the increases. It's being misleadingly reported as a rebate. There needs to be a different approach. My petition to the Government is to ask them to rethink their proposal so that those of us who can afford the increase pay it, and the savings can be GIVEN to those most in need.'

The French Government is taxing energy company EDF £8.4 bn to cover the increase in the cost of energy to consumers in France. It is also capping electricity costs at 4%. It is a fact that energy companies such as EDF are making record profits and are paying out record dividends.

I propose that this Council reject the Chancellor's proposal and refuse to pay the £150 Council Tax Rebate unless funds are forthcoming from the Exchequer to cover it. I also call upon this Council to ask the Chancellor to reconsider the energy loan system, and instead place a tax upon energy companies to subsidise energy to those most in need and place a cap on energy costs in this country.

Proposed: Cllr Cathy Clynn-Davies

Seconded: Cllr Vicki Wells