

NOTICE OF MOTION

COUNCIL MEETING – 14TH NOVEMBER 2024

Proposed by: Councillor Mike Prendergast

Seconded by: Sir Ron Watson CBE

Supporting Sefton's Pensioners

As a result of the Labour Government's decision to penalise pensioners with an income as little as £13,000 per year by removing the Winter Fuel Allowance from around 10 million pensioners nationally, Sefton Council is determined to mitigate in any way possible the harmful effects of this policy on the elderly.

The need for pensioners to keep warm in the winter months should be a clear health priority for our society and around 56,000 pensioners in Sefton are going to suffer great hardship due to the arbitrary withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Allowance.

The effect of the measure on the country's finances amounts to no more than 0.0183% of the total national budget and will have no discernible impact on the overall financial position of the country.

There is overwhelming evidence that one of the key elements to keeping warm and healthy in winter is protective clothing. This is an issue this council can help with.

Council hereby resolves:

- To introduce a scheme in conjunction with private sector retailers to provide those pensioners affected with a lined hoodie type top to help them deal with the adverse impact of the Labour Government's policy.
- To work with major retailers who will be invited to quote for the provision of such garments and identify a means of distribution based on identity with an appropriate method of recording the transaction to avoid abuse of the scheme. Preliminary estimates of cost indicate that they will be in the region of £150000 to £200000 and can be met by using some of the £30 million held currently in unused balances.
- To ensure that those who need support the most Sefton council confirms that the scheme will not apply to the small number of pensioners whose overall income results in them paying the higher rate of Income Tax.
- To make it clear that Sefton council has the best interests of all pensioners at heart, particularly health as a critical element of council policy.