


Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 2 nd October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motion for debate submitted by the Administration	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	All wards

SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one specific Motion submitted by the Administration. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The motion submitted is listed overleaf. The Administration Motion is submitted by the Aspire Group.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council or its partners has a direct responsibility. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. Notice of any proposed amendments to the Motions must be given to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting.

MOTION

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

ADMINISTRATION MOTION FOR DEBATE WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS REDRESS

Proposer: Cllr Saied Ahmed

Seconder: Cllr Kabir Ahmed

Council notes:

- The difficult position that many residents – especially pensioners – find themselves in when paying bills around wintertime.
- That many residents in Tower Hamlets could have to make the choice between eating and heating this winter.
- That the Council continues to do all it can to support residents through the ongoing cost of living crisis.
- That through schemes such as the Warm Hubs and Warm Packs, pensioners will be able to go somewhere warm for a hot drink and receive hats, gloves, socks, hot water bottles and other amenities to help keep them warm and save money on their bills.

Council believes:

- That while these measures and the forthcoming investment into universal free homecare in February will go some way to alleviating these pressures, a cold winter could see vulnerable, elderly residents choosing between heating and eating.
- That around 9,000 pension-age residents who would have been eligible for a winter fuel payment will now not be receiving one.
- That there are also 4,304 residents who are eligible for pension credit who appear to not be claiming.
- That no pensioner or household should have to choose between eating and heating.
- That the Council must therefore provide support for elderly and vulnerable residents in the months to come, to offset any financial strain that will impact those already among the 40% currently living in fuel poverty in Tower Hamlets.

Council resolves:

- To request the creation a *Mayor's Winter Emergency Fund*, to provide those pensioners without pension credit but struggling to make ends meet with financial support with their bills.
- To provide pensioners in a precarious financial position with a payment towards their winter fuel bills. This would see residents of pension age but ineligible for the scrapped *Winter Fuel Allowance* payments receive a payment.
- To launch this scheme at the earliest available Cabinet, with details of how to apply and eligibility in place by then.

- To write to the government requesting the reinstatement of the *Winter Fuel Allowance*.
- To actively promote through a borough-wide campaign how to access pension credit, so those 4,304 residents eligible for pension credit but not claiming it can understand how to do so.