

## **Meeting of the Full Council - 14 December 2017**

### **Agenda Part C - Notices of Motion submitted under Procedural Standing Order 14.2.1(a)**

#### **1. By County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson**

This Council condemns the 12.5% price increase of vital energy supplies by British Gas being inflicted on many people in Lancashire.

Lancashire County Council therefore supports the switch campaign and considers developing a partnership with other authorities like Nottingham, Leeds and Liverpool in supporting the people of Lancashire's energy needs.

#### **2. By County Councillor Geoff Driver**

Council is concerned about the circumstances surrounding the payment of 'Neighbourhood Wellbeing Initiative' grants totalling £500,000 in February and March this year. There was no budget provision for these grants which were paid on the recommendation of individual County Councillors and authorised by County Councillor Ali, the then Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing. There was no vetting by County Council Officers of either the applicants or the proposed purpose to which the grant would be put and it is of particular concern that almost £300,000 of these grants were recommended and authorised by County Councillor Ali himself.

Council therefore resolves to ask the External Auditor to carry out an investigation into the manner in which these grants were recommended, approved and paid and report her findings to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee for their consideration.

#### **3. By County Councillor Christian Wakeford**

Council acknowledges the dedication of home educators to their children's education and respects the parents' rights to choose how and where their children are educated. Council also notes that although the local authorities have a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to establish identities of children who are not receiving suitable education, this duty does not apply to children who are being educated at home.

Council is concerned that the current arrangements may leave some children vulnerable and also that there is no national or local framework for reporting on the attainment of children who are home educated.

Council therefore:

- (i) Recognises the excellent work done by Home Educators, and seeks mutually beneficial solutions to ensure the best start for all children in Lancashire.
- (ii) Supports the principles contained in the Home Education (Duty of Local Authorities) Bill currently before the Lords in connection with monitoring children receiving EHE.

- (iii) Asks the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education outlining the council's concerns and seeking support for the provisions in the Bill.

#### **4. By County Councillor Gina Dowding**

Council is concerned that areas of Lancashire flooded last month, and the lives of Lancashire's residents in some rural communities, towns and villages, have been badly impacted. Residential properties, community buildings and businesses were affected causing both economic hardship and distress to our residents.

Council recognises that factors contributing to flooding resulting from heavy rainfall are varied and include a lack of current capacity of drains and gullies. Responses for action to mitigate future flooding are required from a range of agencies including our own Highways Service, Flood Risk Management, the Environment Agency, United Utilities and the Canal and River Trust.

Council recognises the importance of swift and efficient flood responses to assist those affected during a flood as well as the support and advice services required after a flood in order for people to get their lives and businesses back to normal.

Council will act to ensure that flood prevention, flood mitigation and flood responses are undertaken to the highest possible standard.

Council resolves:

- (i) To ensure that reducing risk of flooding both to new and pre-existing properties, is the key factor when considering all future strategic land use plans and individual planning applications.
- (ii) To call on Government to support plans to develop and implement river catchment flood management plans where appropriate in the county, with a strategic review of upland land management in catchment areas and the adoption of sustainable flood management initiatives (such as increased tree planting, upland overflow/temporary balancing lake).
- (iii) To call on Government and other national agencies to extend grants for flood victims of the November 2017 floods in Lancashire.
- (iv) To support the timely implementation of one stop advice and response centres for flooding where this is in the interests of best service to Lancashire residents affected by flooding.
- (v) To consider transfer, with a commensurate budget, of powers for implementing gully clearing to local district councils where requested so that local knowledge and streamlining of resources may enable effective and timely gully clearing.

#### **5. By County Councillor Jean Parr**

This council notes concerns raised by teachers' unions and others about the growth of 'holiday hunger' amongst children.

Holiday hunger occurs when families who are normally in receipt of free school meals during term time no longer have access to them in the school holidays. This is most acute during the long summer holidays when families must find an additional £30 to £40 to feed their children.

This council notes that Mark Hendrick MP has sponsored a Private Members' Bill by Frank Field MP which places a legal duty on local authorities to ensure the provision of free school meals and activities during the school holidays. This would be paid by earmarking 10p from every pound raised from the sugar tax on soft drinks.

This council resolves:

- (i) To support the Bill and asks the Chief Executive to write to the other two Preston MPs, namely Mark Menzies and Ben Wallace, to explain the Council's support and request that they also offer their support and actively persuade the Conservative led government to put Mr Field's Bill into law.
- (ii) That the Chief Executive writes to all council leaders across Lancashire asking them to support the Bill and requesting them to write to their own Members of Parliament to offer support for the Bill.
- (iii) That the Chief Executive writes to Mark Hendrick MP thanking him for sponsoring the Bill and making him aware that it has the support of the Council. The Council will also publicise its support for the Bill.

## **6. By County Councillor Lizzi Collinge**

This council notes with concern the recent proposed changes to use of housing benefit to fund accommodation costs of survivors of domestic abuse.

The changes would see the end of housing benefit monies currently available for people, primarily women and children, to fund their housing costs while in a refuge. Housing benefit is the last guaranteed source of income available to refugees and makes up about 50% of their revenue. The proposed replacement of this with a grant to local authorities to provide short-term supported housing does not exclusively cover refugees and is therefore an inappropriate replacement.

This council, as a commissioner of domestic violence services, believes that the proposed changes will have a detrimental impact on the ability of refugees to operate. As such, council instructs Chief Executive to write to Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and David Gauke MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, raising our concerns.

## **7. By County Councillor Gina Dowding**

The Lancashire Cycling and Walking Strategy will be published early next year. Council recognises that every day journeys are from home to school, home to work, home to the station, or home to shops or community facilities. Council will therefore ensure that the Cycling and Walking Strategy will address the key issues for increasing cycling and walking as normal travel modes for local trips:

- (i) That cycling and walking trips will be safe, direct, convenient and comfortable and will be seen to be safe and convenient by those who might change from other modes to cycling or walking or who might let their children cycle or walk to school.
- (ii) That the County's major infrastructure asset for cycling and walking, i.e. the road network, is safe and convenient for cyclists and pedestrians and will:-
  - Reduce danger to cyclists from vehicles on our busy roads.
  - Prioritise cyclists and pedestrians trying to cross busy roads and junctions.
  - Enable cyclists to take direct routes instead of being forced onto circuitous routes that have been optimised for motor traffic.
  - Prevent the obstruction of footways with parked cars, overgrown hedges and trees, and poorly maintained surfaces and drains.
  - Help children to walk and cycle to school safely and conveniently to reduce the 'school run' and prepare them for Active Travel in later life.
- (iii) That Council Officers are provided with the funding and training necessary to pursue these objectives.
- (iv) That Local Cycling and Walking groups' views will be taken on-board to help validate the strategy and the highway schemes that affect it.
- (v) That Council will commit to ring fencing 10% of all highways transport infrastructure spend to improving cycling and walking infrastructure.

Council notes that the additional aim of the Cycling and Walking Strategy of promoting Centres of Excellence will not, however good Centres of Excellence may be for leisure, begin to address replacing car trips by active travel for every day journeys. In fact they increase car trips as people drive to the centres of excellence.

## **8. By County Councillor Gina Dowding**

Council is proud of its commitment to, and action to date, to increase animal welfare standards in food procured and served by the County Council in schools and other establishments.

As a local authority Lancashire County Council is accredited to the Soil Association Food for Life Silver Award which accounts for over 85% of the 65,000 meals served across Lancashire on a daily basis.

In light of widely shared concern Council will increase its commitment to animal welfare and therefore resolves:

- To consider efforts and initiatives which will result in the wider uptake of plant-based meals in schools and other county establishments as the best way to reduce animal suffering.
- To work towards adoption of the Soil Association Food for Life Gold Award within the next 6 months which will ensure greater standards of animal welfare. The Gold Award would mean a minimum 15% of total spend will be on organic products and therefore that spend on animal products will be backing the highest welfare systems in agriculture, with a further 5% minimum on free range or organic poultry and pork.

In addition Council notes:

- That achieving higher standards of animal welfare would require a commitment to all animal products purchased being organic.
- That the UK farming sector anticipates the expansion in the number and volume of huge poultry factory farms, known as 'poultry mega farms' (due to forthcoming changes to the UK's markets and associated regulations related to Brexit), which are the antithesis of increasing animal welfare.