

Merton Council Council

6 July 2022

Supplementary Agenda 6

21 Amendments

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Labour Amendment to the Liberal Democrat – Non-Strategic theme motion – Council, 6 July 2022

Cost of Living Emergency – Living Wage Accreditation

Council Notes:

1) ~~1)~~ That low pay still affects many people in Merton and that the Cost-of-Living crisis is making their situation worse

~~1)2)~~ That Merton Council is a London Living Wage direct employer

~~32)~~ The ~~successful Liberal Democrat~~ amendment to the Budget resolution passed by Council in March 2021:

"G) welcoming the provision in the MTFs for increased contract costs/LLW for contracts due to be re-let in 2022/23 onwards, requests Cabinet make real movement towards paying the London Living Wage to care workers employed by outside contractors as and when each contract comes up for retendering and/or renegotiation."

~~2)3)~~ The ongoing work to negotiate new contracts with service providers who pay the London Living Wage, most recently (27th June) Cabinet approving a contract for Supported Living Services for Adults with a Learning Disability which pays London Living Wage to its staff

Council requests that Cabinet present a paper to ~~the September full Council meeting~~ on the costs, implications and timescale for Merton being accredited by the Living Wage Foundation to become in recognition of its status as a Living Wage Employer, ~~accredited by the Living Wage Foundation.~~

Councillor Anthony Fairclough

Councillor Robert Page

Councillor Matthew Willis

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Council 6 July 2022

Agenda item 14

Liberal Democrat amendment to Labour Non-Strategic Theme Motion – Cost of Living Emergency

Agenda Item 14, after “In addition, this Council will:” add a fourth bullet point as follows:

“

- Request that Cabinet looks at ways to directly or indirectly support schools with the additional costs of energy bills, including by supporting them through the capital programme to make improvements that reduce energy use (and therefore also help to contribute to the targets in the Council’s climate strategy and action plan).”

Councillor Anthony Fairclough

Councillor Paul Kohler

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Motion Cost of Living Emergency [Conservative amendment](#)

This Council notes that:

- The Royal College of Psychiatrists has reported that the cost-of-living crisis “poses a threat of pandemic proportions” to the nation’s mental health.
- On 1st April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy cap by 54%. For a typical household paying by direct debit it's now £1,971/year – up by a massive £693/year, from its previous level. Those on prepay, the price cap has also increased by 54%, from £1,309/year to £2,017/year on typical use – a rise of £708/year.
- Workers have seen their National Insurance contributions increased from 12% to 13.25% on 6 April to fund the response to the Covid NHS backlog and new investment in adult social care.
- Additionally – and in this same timeframe – food prices and fuel are rising caused by global inflation post-pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine.

This Council recognises the unprecedented financial pressures that all our residents will face in the coming year, and notes with serious concern, that for those with low or insecure income, these pressures could prove overwhelming.

The Council, therefore, declares a ‘Cost of Living Emergency’.

Recognising that it has a part to play in response, this Council has:

- Established a £2 million Cost of Living Emergency Fund [with £1.1 million of funding -received from the government’s Household Support Fund](#), to target support to residents and voluntary organisations to alleviate the financial burden facing our residents.
- Set up a series of Cost of Living events across the borough to reach those most in need to inform them of resources and support available
- Maintained one of the country’s most generous Council Tax Support schemes for residents on low incomes
- Created a ‘Cost of Living’ Hub on our website to help residents find services that can support them through financial difficulty
- Pledged to continue provision of Free School meals to those eligible throughout the school summer holidays

In addition, this Council will:

- Build on its status as a London Living Wage employer to ensure Merton becomes a London Living Wage Borough
- Appoint a London Living Wage Champion to drive forward this work
- Convene a summit of voluntary organisations to discuss how best to provide support to those most in need

The work of alleviating the Cost of Living crisis is not the Council’s alone. [However, council notes that the actions of the Labour administration and the Mayor of London have caused the ‘Cost of Living](#)

[Emergency' to hit Merton residents hard. Especially as the Labour administration has supported Mayor Khan's proposed ULEZ extension to Merton after the idea was proposed by Merton Liberal Democrats in February 2019 and increased the GLA precept by 32% since becoming Mayor in 2016.](#)

Therefore, this Council calls on the Government to:

- Continue funding the provision of Free School Meals during school holidays
- Extend support to schools and sporting facilities to mitigate against the increase in energy prices, so that children and families will not miss out on crucial education and exercise opportunities
- Extend to Merton the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) pilot which joins up the mental health sector with debt advice services for people in mental health crisis to avoid spiralling debt

[Additionally council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to the Mayor of London to demand that he scrap his plans to extend the ULEZ to Merton and freeze the GLA precept.](#)

[Cllr Nick McLean](#) [Cllr Daniel Holden](#)

Motion now to read:

Motion Cost of Living Emergency

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