

## Amendment to Motion D

Proposed by Cllr Palmer

Seconded by Cllr Ross

### Reinstate Council Tax Benefit

#### Expand the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

#### This Council notes:

- ~~In 2013, the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government scrapped Council Tax Benefits;~~
- ~~This change to our council tax system was branded the Pickles Poll Tax after the Minister of the time - Eric Pickles;~~
- ~~Scrapping Council Tax Benefits resulted in over 5 million low-income households paying more council tax;~~
- ~~The government replaced Council Tax Benefits with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), which intended that people on a low income would pay up to 20% of their council tax, without consideration to affordability.~~
- In 2013 the UK Coalition government replaced Council Tax Benefits with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), to be run by local councils;
- In 2014 the Supreme Court ruled Haringey Council had acted unlawfully by running an “unfair” and “misleading” consultation on the council’s proposed CTRS which indicated that the council had no choice but to require all working age council tax support recipients except disabled people to pay 20% of their Council Tax;
- In January 2013, Haringey’s Labour councillors approved a CTRS that resulted in people previously in receipt of full benefit having to pay 19.8% of their council tax liability;
- There was no, and is no, requirement to introduce a minimum threshold for the CTRS, and many councils have not introduced one;
- After taking account of relative funding arrangements, Labour-run councils were 11% more likely than Liberal Democrat-run councils to introduce minimum thresholds.

#### This Council further notes:

- In Haringey over 25,000 people are claiming CTRS;
- Haringey Council has exempted just 6,000 low-income families from paying any council tax using our own funds;
- London councils such as Liberal Democrat-run Kingston and Richmond, and other Labour councils such as Tower Hamlets and Southwark, have exempted all those who are entitled to the CTRS and require no minimum threshold;
- ~~Nevertheless,~~ Thousands of Haringey residents in receipt of CTRS are behind with their council tax payments.

~~A few months ago, Eric Pickles, now Lord Pickles wrote in Conservative Home advocating for better financial support for low-income households with their council tax bills.~~

**This Council believes that:**

- Pursuing low-income residents for cost-of-living debt is not in line with our morals and values;
- In light of the pandemic, with millions of residents in debt, ~~the government must~~ council should exempt ~~low-income~~ all households eligible for the CTRS from the paying of council tax;
- Maximising income of families on lowest income would better enable them to pay their council tax and enables councils to increase our income and not waste resources on chasing low-income households for a tax they are unable to pay.

~~The Government now needs to reinstate Council Tax Benefit to exempt low-income households from paying council tax;~~

- ~~The Government needs to pay councils for the residents who are exempt through Council Tax Benefit.~~

**This Council resolves:**

- ~~To lobby government and campaign for the reinstatement of Council Tax Benefit.~~
- To implement a more generous Council Tax Reduction Scheme, with a minimum council tax payment of 0% for all those who are entitled to access the scheme.