

Motion H - Addressing the cost-of-living crisis through reducing energy bills

Proposed by: Cllr Scott Emery

Seconded by: Cllr Paul Dennison

This Council believes:

- The Conservative government has failed to protect working families from unprecedented rises in energy bills;
- The Conservative government have failed to regulate our energy market properly with dozens of firms going bust, leaving Haringey residents to foot the bill;
- The Conservative government has failed to meet Britain's renewable energy potential;
- The Conservative government has failed to produce a comprehensive national strategy for insulating homes;
- The government needs to do more to protect Haringey residents from the rise in cost of energy bills;
- Nationalisation of (at least parts of) the energy sector would democratise and decarbonise our energy systems, and reduce energy bills for residents.

This Council notes:

- Haringey residents are facing an unprecedented cost of living rise, with some of our residents having to choose between buying food or heating their homes;
- On 1 April, UK fuel poverty is set to triple overnight to 6.3 million households;
- Haringey Council has introduced extensive financial support for residents struggling with the cost of living;
- In a poorly insulated property in Haringey, up to £1 of every £3 spent on heating is being wasted due to heat loss;
- The Haringey Here to Help scheme is designed to ensure that Haringey residents get all the help and support available to them, including the Haringey Support Fund which supports residents facing unexpected costs;
- Haringey Council has adopted Employer's Requirements that ensures all our new Council Homes are Zero Carbon from start to finish. All new developments will be built to Passivhaus principles using low carbon heat sources and renewables which will result in low energy bills for residents;
- Haringey Council is currently working towards its ambition to fully insulate all of our Council Homes by 2035, and all of our core corporate buildings by 2027;
- These measures Haringey Council has taken so far will not only reduce energy bills, but also helps tackle the climate emergency by reducing carbon emissions;
- Roughly one third of Haringey residents live in the private rented sector, which limits residents' access to a well-insulated home;
- Conservative and Democratic Unionist Party MPs voted against a Labour motion to introduce legislation that would cut the VAT on energy;

- On the 5th January 2022 Liberal Democrats called for a windfall tax on oil and gas companies; a support package which would see the Warm Homes Discount doubled to £300 and offered to all 7.5 million vulnerable and low-income households on Pension Credit and Universal Credit and the Winter Fuel Allowance allowance offered to pensioners doubled to £60; and an emergency home insulation programme, including grants for those in fuel poverty and on low incomes;
- On the 8th January 2022 Labour called for a windfall tax on North Sea Oil and Gas; and proposed measures to reduce bills to save most households £200, with extra support for pensioners, low earners, and the squeezed middle who will receive up to £600 off energy bills;
- On the 11th March 2022 Liberal Democrats announced a plan to help families weather the cost of living crisis with a one-year 2.5 per cent cut in VAT, paid for in part by an extension of their previously announced windfall tax proposals.

This council resolves:

- To continue to support residents who are struggling with high energy bills;
- To investigate ways that the Council can provide even more financial support for household bills;
- To investigate ways to help more residents in the private rented sector insulate their homes;
- To publish details of the enforcement action the Council has taken since 1 April 2018 against landlords that have failed to fulfil their obligations under the MEES Regulations;
- To ensure Homes for Haringey, or any future council housing provider/operator that replaces it, publishes an annual report of properties by Energy Efficiency Certificate (EPC) rating;
- To update its current insulation policy and fully insulate all of our Council Homes by 2030, 5 years earlier than the current target, and all of our core corporate buildings by 2026;
- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy to request the following:
 - o That the government provide immediate financial support for residents struggling to afford energy bills by introducing a one-off windfall tax on North Sea Oil and Gas producers who have profited from the energy price rises;
 - o That the government regulate the energy market effectively to prevent huge increases in energy bills;
 - o That the government take a long-term approach to lowering energy bills, including:
 - § Reducing Britain's reliance on imported gas by accelerating home grown renewables;
 - § Undertaking a national home insulation strategy which takes into account the private rented sector and encourages landlords to insulate properties they rent;

§ Taking practical steps to nationalise some or all of the energy sector, with the aim of providing affordable energy for all.