

Council – 17 July 2024

Liberal Democrats Group Amendment to motion 7b – Cost of Living: Reduce Bills and Tackle Poverty

This Council notes that the Cost-of-Living crisis is not over.

Between April 2022 and April 2024 the cost of a basic weekly food basket has increased by 25%.

Whilst energy bills were set to fall by 7% from July the Ofgem price cap is expected to rise again by around 10% in October, meaning bills stay 50-60% above pre-crisis levels.

We further note that bills could have already been lowered through an adequate programme of home insulation in line with net zero commitments. Rents in the private housing sector, where many of the most vulnerable households live, have continued to increase at a rate above headline inflation.

This Council calls on the new Government to:

- Abolish the two-child benefit cap immediately.
- Further extend and increase the Household Support Fund as an interim measure, enabling councils to help those in the most need throughout this coming winter.
- Rapidly end no fault evictions and give the power to local authorities to control rents if the local rental market is overheated as is currently the case in Scotland.
- Rapidly end competitive bidding for the social housing decarbonisation fund and expand available funding so all local authorities and social housing providers can maximise their work to shift to cleaner and cheaper energy in homes.
- Bring forward mechanisms for homeowners to more easily access property-linked finance to decarbonise heating and reduce energy costs; and ~~for private tenants to insist that their landlords access property-linked finance on their behalf~~ to bring forward mechanisms to support and encourage private landlords to access property-linked finance on their behalf of their tenants.