

# Council Forum

Thursday, 3rd October, 2024

6.00 pm

Council Chamber, Blackburn Town Hall

<https://aisapps.mediasite.com/AuditelScheduler/Player/Index/?id=f54c9d8b-6223-41d2-9dff-8eed27ef0fb6&presID=6fe405970d5f4caf941c8c127b2993421d>

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## AGENDA

1. **Prayers by Mayor's Chaplain followed by Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**  
**2024 07 25 CI Forum Mins** **4 - 11**  
Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM** **12**  
Declarations of Interest Form
4. **Presentation of Civic Service Awards**  
Civic Service Awards will be presented to former Councillors Dave Harling and Abdul Patel in recognition of their outstanding service over many years serving on the Council.
5. **Mayoral Communications**
6. **Council Forum**  
To consider any questions from members of the public under Procedure Rule 10.
7. **Motions**  
To consider any Motions received under Procedure Rule 12.

### **(a) Winter Heating Payment**

*This Council considers that the Chancellor's recent decision to end the Winter Fuel payment with no compensatory measures to protect needy pensioners; to restrict it to only those in receipt of Pension Credits and other benefits to be ill conceived and contrary to the universality of the payment as introduced by Gordon Brown in 1997.*

*It is widely believed by organisations such as Age Concern, Trade Unions and Councils that as many as 1.6 million pensioners could be adversely affected by this decision.*

*Particularly at risk will be those:*

- With high energy needs because of disability or illness and, or live in energy inefficient homes, which are expensive to heat (around 200,000 in this instance).*
- Who just miss out on Pension Credit because their very modest incomes are slightly too high for them to be eligible, usually because they have a tiny occupational pension. Only those receiving a pension of less than £218.15 a week or £332.95 per week for a couple will be eligible for Pension Credit. This is significantly lower than the Living Wage Rate of £11.44.*
- Who currently do not claim Pension Credit but are eligible, around 1 million. The Government's approach fails to consider that this is an entrenched aversion and that administrative barriers are also a factor for non-claiming.*

*The timing of this cut is appalling; announced shortly before the winter months and after Ofgem raised the Energy Price Cap by 10% meaning a typical household bill will rise, from 1<sup>st</sup> October, by £149 per annum. It is expected that the number of people eligible for the Winter Payment will fall by 10 million (from 11.1 million to only 1.2 million); it also means that if pensioners choose to eat rather than heat they will not avoid receiving a bill for the iniquitous standing charge.*

*Government is about choice – this choice is without merit and makes no political or financial sense.*

*This Council resolves to:*

*Request the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on behalf of the 21,000 pensioners who reside in Blackburn with Darwen, calling for the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit receipt to be immediately reversed and seek alternative options, where economies can be made without incurring unnecessary financial hardship on those least able to afford them.*

*Mover: Councillor Kevin Connor  
Seconder: Councillor John Slater*

<b>8.</b>	<b>Updates from Other Committees</b>	
	<b>Item 8.1 Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report 2023.24</b>	<b>13 - 48</b>
	<b>Item 8.2 OSC Annual Report v0.2</b>	
	<b>Item 8.3 2024 10 Council Forum O&amp;S Draft Update</b>	
	8.1 Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee for 2023/24.	
	8.2 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2023/24.	
	8.3 Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	<b>Leader</b>	
	<b>Item 9.1 Leader's Report 3.10.24 - FINAL</b>	<b>49 - 51</b>
<b>9.2</b>	<b>Growth &amp; Development</b>	
	<b>Item 9.2 Growth and Development</b>	<b>52 - 57</b>
<b>9.3</b>	<b>Housing and Public Health</b>	
	<b>Item 9.3 Housing and Public Health</b>	<b>58 - 60</b>
<b>9.4</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Governance</b>	
	<b>Item 9.4 Finance and Governance - October Final</b>	<b>61 - 63</b>
<b>9.5</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Communities</b>	
	<b>Item 9.5 Environment and Communities</b>	<b>64 - 66</b>
<b>9.6</b>	<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	
	<b>Item 9.6 Adults Social Care and Health</b>	<b>67 - 69</b>
<b>9.7</b>	<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	
	<b>Item 9.7 Children Young People and Education</b>	<b>70 - 73</b>
<b>9.8</b>	<b>Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	
	<b>Item 9.8 Digital and Customer Services - October 2024</b>	<b>74 - 76</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Questions from Members</b>	
	To consider any questions received from Members under Procedure Rule 11.	

Date Published: Wednesday, 25 September 2024  
Denise Park, Chief Executive