



Local Government Act 1972

I Hereby Give You Notice that an **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Durham County Council** being held remotely via **Microsoft Teams** on **Wednesday 24 March 2021** at **10.00 a.m.** to transact the following business:-

1. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021 (Pages 5 - 22)
2. To receive any declarations of interest from Members
3. Chair's Announcements
4. Leader's Report
5. Questions from the Public
6. Petitions
7. Annual Review of the Constitution - Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Pages 23 - 90)
8. Motions on Notice

Councillor T Tucker to Move

During these unprecedented times it has become even more difficult for our vulnerable residents to make ends meet. Unemployment, furlough, zero hours contracts, disability. There are lots of reasons why our residents struggle in 'normal' times but in these times, one reason has become more apparent - the costs associated with energy for your home.

Residents in a 2 bed property who are allowed to pay by direct debit pay on average £75 to £82 per month dual fuel.

Residents in the same type of property with prepayment meters pay on average £100 to £150 per month, even though they are paying for their energy upfront as they use it. The standing charge for prepayment meters per day is higher than for direct debit customers. The cost of gas and electricity is also higher.

I personally, was recently offered a reduction in my energy by my supplier, if I owned my own home. There are different tariffs, different contract types, why? Gas is gas and electricity is electricity! Why can't it be one price for everyone? In the meantime, our vulnerable residents with prepayment meters are having to choose between eating and heating their homes. In short they are being discriminated against for their circumstances.

We, as a council, offer all manner of support to our residents with fuel poverty issues and other financial help, but if one of the root causes is not tackled then this will never change.

I call upon Full Council to support my motion and to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to ask for communication to be undertaken with providers to ensure that his office is not only ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean but to also ensure that they are 'affordable' for all residents, no matter how they pay their bill.

Cllr A Surtees to Move

This Council notes that In Durham we are seeing a crisis of food poverty which is having a devastating impact on families and communities in our county. This crisis has accelerated significantly through the politics of austerity since 2010, whilst the economic contraction over the last year has laid bare the fragility of family finances in too many households in our county. The situation is truly shocking for one of the richest nations in the world and highlights the gross inequality of the UK in 2021.

The National Food Strategy is the first independent review of England's entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision. It is headed by Henry Dimbleby and next reports to Government early this year.

The Right To Food campaign is arguing that the 11 million people in food poverty should be central to this strategy.

Enshrining the 'Right To Food' into law would clarify Government obligations on food poverty and would introduce legal avenues to hold Government bodies accountable for violations.

This council calls for the 'Right To Food' to be incorporated into the 'National Food Strategy'. We ask the Chief Executive to write to Henry Dimbleby, Independent Lead of the National Food Strategy to further this request.

Councillors L Hovvels to Move

As we approach a year since the first lockdown of the COVID Pandemic the County Council of Durham wishes to acknowledge the debt and gratitude of the Community, owed to the numerous groups and individuals, for the service given to protect and assist us all.

We wish to thank:

- all the staff and volunteers across the whole of the County Council, in all the various roles undertaken to support business, community and individual residents;
- all the teaching and non-teaching staff who have kept our schools open for the children of both key workers and those requiring support;
- the blue light emergency services, Fire, Police, Ambulance, Mountain and Coastal Rescue who have continued to keep our communities safe;
- our colleagues in the National Health Service, residential and nursing homes and Community Care Services, services for which we will be eternally grateful;
- KEY WORKERS from all parts of the County who have kept the arteries of our society working, and feeding the nation;
- the Community Hubs, Community Groups across the whole County who supported those shielding and in need of support; and

- all the residents who have and continue to act to be safe, to save lives and save the NHS

This has been and continues to be challenging for us all but everyone has risen to the challenge to which we thank them, and ask this thanks be formally recorded for posterity.

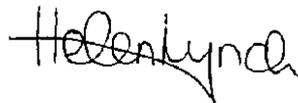
We must not forget those who have been so greatly affected by the Pandemic, the families who have lost loved ones, those who have had and continue to be affected by the virus.

Our thoughts and support go out to them all.

9. Questions from Members

And pursuant to the provisions of the above-named act, **I Hereby Summon You** to attend the said meeting

Dated this 16th day of March 2021



Helen Lynch
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

To: All Members of the County Council