

Kirklees Council



Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield

Tuesday 4 November 2025

Dear Member

The Council will meet on Wednesday 12 November 2025 at 5.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view via the Council's website.

The following matters will be debated:

Pages

1: Announcements by the Mayor and Chief Executive

To receive any announcements from the Mayor and Chief Executive.

2: Apologies for absence

Group Business Managers to submit any apologies for absence.

3: Minutes of Previous Meeting

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Council Meeting held on 15 October 2025.

1 - 14

4: Declaration of Interests

15 - 16

Members will be asked to advise if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or any other interests, which may prevent them from participating in any discussion or vote on any of the items.

5: Petitions (From Members of the Council)

To receive any Petitions from Members of the Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.

6: Deputations & Petitions (From Members of the Public)

Council will receive any petitions and/or deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

7: Public Question Time

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

8: West Yorkshire Combined Authority Minutes

17 - 34

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 18 September 2025.

9: Written Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees and Nominated Spokespersons

To receive written questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees and Nominated Spokespersons in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

One supplementary oral question will be permitted.

10: Key Discussion

A Key Discussion will take place on Housing Provision in Kirklees.

Under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 5(5), the Key Discussion debate shall commence no later than 7pm.

11: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Scott, H Zaman, Masood Ahmed, Hussain, Moore, A Zaman, Anwar, Darwan and Daji;

“This Council notes:

- The UK Government and the UN have both recognised that human rights due diligence is a core part of responsible business and public sector conduct.
- The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI) provide a framework for ethical sourcing and investment.
- Section 18 of the Procurement Act 2023 permits contracting authorities to consider a supplier’s track record and compliance with international standards, including human rights.
- Oxford, North Somerset, and other councils have taken steps to strengthen their procurement and investment policies to ensure public money is not used to support companies implicated in serious human rights violations.

This Council believes:

- Kirklees Council has a responsibility to ensure its financial decisions align with its stated values on equality, justice, and human rights.
- Taxpayers' money should not be used to support companies that are complicit in or benefit from breaches of international law — including the occupation of Palestinian territories, apartheid, or other recognised violations.
- Ethical procurement and investment is not only a moral imperative, but also a legal and reputational risk management tool.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Review and strengthen the Council's Investment and Procurement Strategies to ensure they:
 - Align with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
 - Incorporate the UN Principles for Responsible Investment;
 - Make clear that the Council may exclude suppliers who are directly involved in or benefit from serious violations of international humanitarian law or human rights;
 - Remain compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and all applicable UK legislation.
 2. Request that the Cabinet bring forward an updated Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy for adoption, with clear criteria and governance arrangements for implementation and monitoring.
 3. Mandate that all Council contracts and investments be reviewed against the updated policy, with a report brought to Cabinet within six months.
 4. Affirm the Council's commitment to transparency and ethical stewardship of public resources."
-

12: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Firework use, Enforcement and Community Safety

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Scott, Anwar, H Zaman, Ahmed, A Zaman, Darwan and Daji;

“Council notes that:

1. Fireworks are an important part of many celebrations and can be enjoyed safely when used responsibly.
2. However, councillors across Kirklees continue to receive reports of fireworks being used irresponsibly — late at night, in residential streets, and outside recognised celebration periods — causing significant distress to residents, pets, wildlife and people with sensory or health conditions.
3. The sale and use of fireworks for private use remains permitted nationally, though many safety and animal-welfare organisations, including the RSPCA, RoSPA and the National Fire Chiefs Council, have called for tighter controls.
4. Kirklees Council already has Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in place to restrict fireworks in certain public areas, but local powers over retail sales are limited without national legislation.

Council therefore believes that:

1. Fireworks should primarily be used at organised, licensed public displays and community events.
2. Restricting general retail sales for private use would help reduce nuisance, distress and risk, while allowing communities to continue celebrating safely.
3. Stronger local enforcement, clearer public information and national legislative reform are all necessary to improve public safety and wellbeing.

Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade and the Secretary of State for the Home Department to request consideration of tighter national controls limiting the retail sale of fireworks to licensed organisers of approved public events.
2. Ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety to review local licensing and trading-standards arrangements to ensure all available powers are being used to regulate sales and prevent nuisance.
3. Work with West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, and local animal-welfare organisations to promote a public awareness campaign each autumn on the safe and considerate use of fireworks.
4. Encourage town and parish councils and community groups to host and promote organised displays as safer, inclusive

alternatives to private use.

5. Request that the relevant Scrutiny Panel consider the inclusion of a review on the local impact of fireworks misuse within its workplan, and report back to Council with recommendations within six months.”

13: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Raising the Flag of Palestine on Town Halls Across Kirklees

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Anwar, Bramwell, Daji, Darwan, Scott, H Zaman, A Zaman, Hussain, Ahmed and Kahut;

“Council notes that:

- On 29 November 2012, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to grant Palestine non-member observer State status, effectively recognising it as a state within the international community.
- 29 November is also observed annually as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, established by the UN in 1977.
- The people of Kirklees have a proud record of standing up for peace, justice, and human rights around the world. Our communities are deeply diverse, with many residents who have direct family and cultural ties to Palestine and the wider Middle East.
- Displaying flags in recognition of international days and events has been a longstanding way for Kirklees Council to express solidarity with oppressed peoples and affirm our commitment to universal human rights.

Council believes that:

- Raising the flag of Palestine is a peaceful and symbolic gesture of solidarity with those striving for freedom, equality, and self-determination.
- Such an act reflects our borough’s values of inclusivity, justice, and international cooperation, and aligns with the UK’s own stated support for a two-state solution based on international law.
- Public recognition on this day will send a clear message that Kirklees stands for peace and supports a future where Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side in safety and dignity.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. That in line with the Council's Flag Flying Policy, the Leader, Chief Executive and Mayor be requested to support the Raising of the flag of Palestine on all Kirklees Council town halls and civic buildings on 29 November each year, in line with the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
2. Issue a public statement reaffirming Kirklees Council's commitment to peace, justice, and the right of all peoples to self-determination under international law.
3. Encourage community engagement and education around international solidarity and human rights, including opportunities for residents to learn about the significance of this day."

14: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Opposition to Disability Benefit Reforms

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Scott, H Zaman, Masood Ahmed, Hussain, Moore, A Zaman and Anwar;

"This Council notes with serious concern:

That the Government has passed the Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment Bill, implementing parts of the earlier Pathways to Work Green Paper published in March 2025.

That the original Green Paper proposed wide-ranging reforms to PIP and long-term sickness benefits, including (i) stricter eligibility thresholds (such as the "4 points in one activity" test) (ii) reductions in support for people with mental health conditions and (iii) a shift toward linking disability benefits more closely with work and health treatment.

That while some of these proposals were dropped following public and parliamentary opposition (notably the new PIP scoring rule), others remain in force or are being implemented in stages, particularly those related to Universal Credit, the Work Capability Assessment, and health-related conditionality.

That the Government has confirmed existing PIP claimants will not be immediately affected, but that new claimants from late 2026 onwards may face stricter rules depending on further guidance and secondary legislation.

That changes to Universal Credit include plans to remove or reduce the "limited capability for work-related activity" element for new claimants, especially under-22s, potentially leaving thousands of vulnerable people with significantly less support.

This Council further notes:

That campaigners and expert organisations including Citizens Advice, Health Equity North, and the Resolution Foundation have warned of substantial financial losses and increased hardship under the reforms.

That research by Health Equity North estimates Huddersfield constituency alone could lose £17 million annually under the original package of proposals, with lasting consequences for residents, the local economy, and essential services.

That many of the worst-affected areas are in the North, with longstanding structural inequalities, poorer health outcomes, and stretched public services, including Kirklees.

That local councils like Kirklees are likely to face additional pressures on:

Adult social care, Housing and homelessness services, Welfare support, advice, and crisis payments, Mental health and public health provision, without any clear guarantees of increased funding or capacity.

This Council believes:

That the reforms represent a regressive shift in disability and sickness support, undermining the rights, dignity and independence of people with long-term conditions.

That there is insufficient evidence that the reforms will lead to improved outcomes for disabled people, and growing concern they may increase poverty, reduce access to support, and worsen health inequalities.

That Kirklees has a duty to speak out against national policies that will directly harm its most vulnerable residents and shift costs onto already overstretched local services.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (1) Formally oppose the changes to Universal Credit and disability benefits as enacted under the Universal Credit and PIP Bill, and any future secondary legislation that restricts access to PIP, particularly for people with mental health conditions or fluctuating needs.
- (2) Write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, and Chancellor of the Exchequer to (i) express the Council's objection to the enacted reforms (ii) call for a halt to any further erosion of disability-related entitlements and (iii) request a cross-party review of the long-term adequacy of disability and sickness benefits.
- (3) Write to all Kirklees MPs urging them to (i) oppose any additional regressive measures in forthcoming legislation (ii) speak up for disabled and chronically ill constituents and (iii)

support amendments or repeal of the most damaging elements of the reforms.

- (4) Publish a public statement outlining the Council's position, and commit to working with local charities, advocacy groups, carers, and disabled residents to monitor and raise awareness of the changes.
- (5) Request that the Overview and Scrutiny function undertakes a full impact review of the reforms on (i) local service demand (ii) financial risk to the Council and (iii) lived experience of Kirklees residents, particularly in relation to care, health, and income security.
- (6) Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions seeking formal assurances that (i) existing PIP claimants will not be reassessed under any new rules without full consultation and safeguarding (ii) all further benefit changes will be subject to published Equality Impact Assessments and (iii) that local authorities will receive sufficient funding to manage additional demand and hardship resulting from national reforms."

15: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Proposed 20% VAT on taxi and Private Hire Fares

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors H Zaman, A Zaman, Ahmed, Scott, Hussain, Anwar, Daji, Darwan and Kahut;

"This Council notes that:

- (i) Reports suggest the Government is considering imposing the standard 20% rate of VAT on all taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) fares.
- (ii) HM Treasury's own consultation on this issue (April 2024) acknowledged that such a measure could increase passenger costs by up to 20%, with the greatest impact on disabled people, older residents, families without access to a car, and communities with poor public transport links.
- (iii) The Institute of Chartered Accountants (July 2024) warned that applying VAT in this way would "disproportionately affect those who rely on these services in areas with poor public transport."
- (iv) Transport for London, in its submission to HMRC (August 2024), raised serious concerns about affordability for passengers already struggling with the cost of living.

This Council believes that:

- (i) Taxis and private hire vehicles are not a luxury but a lifeline for many residents in Kirklees.
- (ii) This move would hit the lowest-paid hardest: shift workers, NHS staff, care workers, and those on zero-hours contracts who rely on taxis when buses and trains are not running. For them, taxis are the only way to reach work on time. A 20% price hike risks cutting off access to jobs and essential services, deepening inequality.
- (iii) Local taxi and private hire operators, already facing rising fuel, insurance and licence costs, would struggle to absorb this change, risking job losses and reduced availability of services.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (i) Formally oppose any government move to impose 20% VAT on taxi and private hire fares.
- (ii) Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Transport setting out this Council's concerns about the disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, low-paid workers and the taxi/PHV industry.
- (iii) Ask the Leader of the Council to raise this issue with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Local Government
- (iv) Publicly reaffirm this Council's support for accessible, affordable and fair transport for all Kirklees residents.

16: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Protect Our Pensioners - Say No to Taxing the State Pension

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Scott, H Zaman, Masood Ahmed, Hussain, A Zaman and Anwar;

"This Council notes:

- (i) That the UK State Pension is already one of the lowest in Europe, with more than one in ten pensioners living in poverty.
- (ii) That from April 2026 the full new State Pension is expected to exceed the income tax threshold, meaning many pensioners could face paying tax simply for receiving their pension entitlement.
- (iii) That after decades of working and paying in, people deserve to retire with dignity, not be penalised with an additional tax burden on their basic pension.

This Council believes:

- (i) The State Pension should be tax-free.
- (ii) It is unjust to penalise pensioners by bringing their basic pension into the scope of income tax.
- (iii) Government should prioritise protecting pensioners from financial hardship, not push more into poverty.

This Council resolves to:

- (i) Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer urging Government to exempt the State Pension from income tax.
 - (ii) Support national campaigns and petitions that seek to protect the State Pension from taxation.
 - (iii) Call on the Government to raise the personal allowance in line with increases to the state pension and to take urgent steps to tackle pensioner poverty.
 - (iv) Circulate this resolution to all MPs representing constituencies across Kirklees, urging them to raise this matter in Parliament."
-

17: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Growing Epidemic of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Munro and Davies;

"This Council notes:

- 1) Violence against women and girls (VAWG) includes female homicide, rape, sexual assault, domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and controlling and coercive behaviour. Some of these are complex crimes which have a devastating and often life-changing impact on victims, their families and friends;
- 2) Between 2018/19 to 2022/23, police records of VAWG in England and Wales rose by 37%. In West Yorkshire, domestic abuse related crimes make up 21% of all recorded crimes in region. However, this is the tip of the iceberg, as often abuse is never reported;
- 3) It has been reported recently that approximately 2 million women a year in England and Wales are victims of male violence. It's also estimated that at least 1 in 12 women are victims of violence perpetrated by men, which includes harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence;
- 4) According to the Home Office, the national average cost to the UK of violence against women and girls is estimated to be in the region of £37 billion annually (including cost of health, legal and social services). In Kirklees, the Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment (KJSA) has indicated that the

estimated cost of domestic violence/abuse to agencies locally is in the region of £43 million each year;

- 5) While victims of domestic abuse are not confined to a particular gender, the evidence shows that the majority of victims are women. Between November 2022 and November 2023, there were 59,681 total reported cases of domestic abuse across West Yorkshire, with 43,691 (73%) of the victims being female.

This Council believes that:

- 1) Violence against women and girls is a significant issue on a local, regional and national level. It is a national emergency, and the scale of violence is akin to a public health crisis;
- 2) There is a lot of good work being done at a local and regional level to tackle the issue of violence against women and girls and this Council commends the work already being done. For instance, Kirklees Council is a supporter of the White Ribbon campaign, which encourages men to challenge misogynistic behaviour. The Council also has a strategic focus on tackling VAWG through its *Kirklees Communities Partnership Plan* and focus on multi-agency collaboration and public safety initiatives. At a regional level, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is also taking a strategic approach through its *Safety of Women and Girls Strategy*, which includes a commitment to embed healthy relationships education in schools and communities, behavioural change through intervention programmes, improving safety in public spaces and strengthening services for victims and survivors;
- 3) While Kirklees Council is actively working to tackle VAWG, there is room to do more, especially in terms of leadership, visibility and long-term investment. The Council should publicly appoint an elected member VAWG Champion – to provide visible leadership, ensure accountability and champion the voices of survivors in policy-making. The Council should also improve public engagement, as there is limited public-facing communication about VAWG initiatives. Furthermore, public reporting on outcomes and progress is limited, while the Council should also take a whole council approach, embedding VAWG awareness and prevention across all council services (including housing, education and licensing).

This Council, therefore, resolves:

- 1) To conduct a review into Kirklees Council's procurement practices for commissioning VAWG services to ensure they align with statutory guidance and meet the needs of all survivors, including the most marginalised survivors;

- 2) To appoint a Kirklees councillor as a VAWG Champion, to hold the council to account on these pledges and amplify the voice of survivors. The VAWG Champion will be a designated individual within the council who will be responsible for leading efforts to address and reduce violence against women and girls, including advocating for survivors, implementing strategies to prevent VAWG and ensuring that appropriate support services are available;
 - 3) To improve public engagement and transparency by publishing regular updates on VAWG-related initiatives, outcomes and community impact;
 - 4) For the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary demanding an urgent Royal Commission into male violence against women. A Royal Commission is the highest form of public inquiry in the UK, and it would be set up to gather evidence and make binding recommendations. The Royal Commission could examine the root causes of male violence, investigate the failures of the criminal justice system, recommend long-term cross-government reforms (e.g. to education, health, policing and social care) and help to drive systemic change by focusing on the voices of survivors and marginalised communities.”
-

18: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to the Abolition of the Council Committee System

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors J C Lawson, Davies, J D Lawson, Cooper, Scottt and H Zaman;

“This Council notes:

- 1) The statement by the former Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon MP, on the 24th June 2025 which outlined the Government’s plan to introduce legislation which will ‘simplify governance arrangements’ for local authorities in England and abolish the committee system, requiring all councils to adopt the leader and cabinet system;
- 2) Councils in the UK typically operate under one of three governance structures: leader and cabinet, committee or mayoral systems;
- 3) Most councils currently operate under a leader and cabinet model. The committee system was the way that councils were governed up until 2000. The Local Government Act

2000 changed the models of governance, introducing the leader and executive (cabinet) and elected mayor and executive models. The Local Government Act 2000 also resulted in the abolition of the committee system in England everywhere (except shire authorities with a population under 85,000). However, as part of the Localism Act 2011, the committee system was re-introduced as an option for all local authorities to adopt;

- 4) Typically, under the leader and cabinet model, the full council elects a leader, who then appoints a cabinet (executive), with cabinet members responsible for specific areas of service and the cabinet being the primary decision-making body. Under the committee system model, power is exercised, alongside full council, by a number of politically balanced committees, each with a specific area of responsibility. Under the executive mayor and cabinet model, a directly-elected mayor leads the executive and is accountable to the electorate;
- 5) Currently, councils in England can change their governance arrangements and local residents can have a say on the governance model adopted by their local authority via a referendum;
- 6) As part of the Government's plans, councils currently using the committee model, including councils which have recently transitioned to the committee model following a referendum, will be required to transition to the leader and cabinet model;
- 7) The Government has argued that the changes are needed in order to improve clarity and accountability in decision-making, enhance efficiency by streamlining governance structures and preventing unnecessary expenditure on governance transitions.

This Council believes that:

- 1) Councils across the country use various governance systems, with some favouring the committee system and others preferring executive systems. Councils should have the choice to choose which model of governance best suits the needs of its residents. The details of councils' internal arrangement should be a matter for local discretion. Although Kirklees Council currently operates a leader and cabinet model, it should be given the opportunity to transition to the committee system if Kirklees residents support this. Local people should be given the power to make the best choice for themselves;

- 2) The Government's plans are at odds with the devolved powers that the Labour party advocates. It should not be a one-size fits all approach. Fundamentally, the Government's plans to change the way that councils operate is top-down and heavy handed, ignores local choice and undermines local democracy. It is centralisation by stealth;
- 3) The committee system offers a number of benefits and abolishing it is a huge opportunity lost. As part of a committee system, councils are not run by a small group of councillors; instead, the committee system supports cross-party collaboration, and councils are often run in a more inclusive manner. Council committee systems can also increase accountability, reduce top-down decision making, provide a platform for diverse perspectives and provide greater opportunities for participation;

This Council, therefore, resolves to:

Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness, Alison McGovern MP, to express concern about the Government's plans to standardise local government structures and express concern that local authorities have not been consulted. The Government should abandon its plans for reform, since the measures will undermine local empowerment and local decision-making."

19: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to the Need for SEND Profit Caps on Private Providers

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors Burke and J C Lawson;

"This Council notes:

- 1) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) refers to young people who require extra help and support with their learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support;
- 2) Private providers play a key role in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities sector, including early years, alternative provision and specialised independent schools and are often commissioned by councils to provide support and education for children with SEND. In Kirklees, there are 10,098 pupils aged 4 to 16 years with SEND. Of these 9,407 pupils are educated in mainstream schools and settings and 691 in special schools (2022). SEND provision is a key issue

for many parents in Kirklees.

Across England, approximately 1.7 million pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, representing around 19.6% of pupils;

- 3) There has been a huge surge in the need for SEND provision and, as a result, demand for school places supporting SEND students across the UK. Many state schools are not adequately equipped to meet the increased demand or to support pupils with more complex and challenging needs. This has led to expert providers across the private and charitable school sectors stepping in;
- 4) According to House of Commons Library research, commissioned by the Liberal Democrat national party, the top private equity companies providing SEND schooling have seen their annual profits increase as the SEND crisis has worsened, with some making margins of over 20%. Some of the private providers of special needs education are backed by private equity companies based in tax havens or foreign sovereign wealth funds;
- 5) The SEND crisis has led to many councils facing exorbitant costs for private provision. This is at a time when local authority budgets are being pushed to the brink, with many facing effective bankruptcy or end service provision for vulnerable groups;
- 6) The Liberal Democrat national party has demanded that private providers of special education are subject to an operating profit cap of 8% in order to curb exorbitant profits. The party has called for the Government to cap the profits of these companies to ensure that money is channelled back into the SEND system and not into the pockets of shareholders.

This Council, therefore, resolves to:

Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson MP, to express concern that the profiteering from private equity firms is a major driver of the crisis in our SEND system and to cap the profits of these firms at 8%, ensuring that the priority is provision and not profits and helping to cut the excessive profiteering off the backs of disabled children. While the Government's commitment to reform the SEND system is welcome, profit-limiting controls are needed as a matter of urgency."

20: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Labour's Welfare Cuts

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors J C Lawson and Marchington;

“This Council notes:

- 1) The Government has published a Green Paper, which includes proposals to change disability and long-term sickness benefits. This includes Personal Independence Payment (PIP);
- 2) PIP is claimed by nearly 3.7 million people in England and Wales, which includes residents in Kirklees. PIP is a benefit not linked to being in work or out of work but instead designed to help people with the additional unavoidable costs of having a disability. It is used by people who need daily help because of a long-term illness or disability or mental health condition. Many disabled people rely on PIP to cover the cost of getting to and from work, paying for essential equipment and for meeting their social care charges;
- 3) PIP is a non-means tested benefit, meaning that claims are not affected by an individual's income, capital or savings. It consists of 2 parts: a daily living component and a mobility component. Depending on their assessment, individuals may receive one or both components;
- 4) The Government's Green Paper proposes that PIP will be focused more on those with higher needs and reports suggest that eligibility criteria will be tightened. This may mean that individuals judged to have lower needs will no longer be eligible for the daily living component of PIP. In effect, it may mean that some individuals could lose entitlement to the daily living element of PIP and potentially other entitlements linked to this award. If an individual loses the daily living component, it will directly affect their caregiver, as the carer may become ineligible for Carer's Allowance or the carer element within Universal Credit. Furthermore, the Government's Spring Statement indicated that they wish to freeze the health element of Universal Credit for existing claimants until 2030 – meaning it will no longer increase with inflation, resulting in a real terms loss of income for over two million households;
- 5) Responding to the Chancellor's Spring Statement and the publication of the Government's impact assessment for their planned cuts to disability benefits, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation state that the cuts to health-related benefits risk pushing 250,000 people into poverty, including 50,000 children;
- 6) People who struggle to even wash their hair may have their payments reduced by an average of £1,720 per year. It is

estimated that 370,000 people with disabilities will no longer qualify for PIP under the Government's new assessment rules.

This Council believes that:

- Some of these changes will have a negative impact on the lives of Kirklees residents;
- These changes amount to nothing less than an attack on those living with disabilities and health conditions – who need PIP payments and health-related Universal Credit, to live independent, dignified lives;
- Freezing, reducing and removing these payments will have a catastrophic impact on million of households who, due to disability and ill-health, face some of the highest rates of material deprivation in the UK.

This Council, therefore, resolves to:

- 1) Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing the Council's grave concerns about the impact of these changes and urging them to reverse their decision to target those with disabilities and health conditions with cuts to their support payments;
- 2) Follow the example set by Stockport Council in developing a strategy to maximise the number of people claiming benefits they are entitled to in Kirklees, by using existing resources, including the Council website, the Council's newsletters, notices in local newspapers and council social media feeds;
- 3) Ask the Council's scrutiny function to convene a Task & Finish Group, to identify likely impacts on the local population and to assess the likely demand for support from the Council and its local partners."

21: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Two Child Limit to Benefit Payments

To consider the following Motion in the name of Councillors Marchington and Munro;

"This Council notes:

- 1) The two-child limit to benefit payments was introduced by the Conservative Government in 2017 and is currently supported by the new Labour Government. The cap restricts Child Tax Credit and Universal Credit to the first two children in most

households;

2) The recent research conducted by the End Child Poverty Coalition, which has found that:

- 1.5 million children in the UK live in households subject to the two-child limit on benefit payments. This is roughly one-in-ten children in the UK.
- In 2023/24 the two-child limit cost families up to £3,235 per child each year.
- There is a strong correlation between families affected by the two-child limit and those who are living in poverty.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty overnight, and significantly reduce the level of poverty that a further 850,000 children live in.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would cost £1.3 billion. However, it is estimated that child poverty costs the economy over £39 billion a year. This includes increased public service expenditures and lost economic output, due to lower earnings potential among adults who grow up in impoverished conditions.

3) New data which reveals that the Yorkshire and Humber region, which includes Kirklees, is a hotspot for children hit by the two-child limit on benefits, with 13% of children in Yorkshire and Humber impacted. As a comparison, across the nations, the figure is 11% for both England and Wales. At the same time, the number of children living in poverty in Kirklees in 2021/22 was 34,969. That is 33.7% of all children living in the district;

4) The Liberal Democrat national party has consistently opposed the two-child limit to benefit payments since it was introduced – calling for it to be axed in their 2017, 2019 and 2024 manifestos. Council notes with concern the stance of the Labour Government, who are committed to keeping the cap – going as far as suspending the whip from MPs who rebel against this position.

This Council believes that:

The two-child limit to benefit payments is a cruel and harmful policy that should be scrapped. Research from the University of York has shown that its introduction has had no positive impacts on employment and earnings. Instead, it has dragged thousands of local families into poverty and has been a key driver of child poverty in recent years. Furthermore, the policy has had a negative impact on many people's mental health, increasing stress and anxiety and harming their wellbeing, with knock-on effects on children's opportunities and

wellbeing.

This Council, therefore, resolves to:

- 1) Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating Kirklees Council's strong belief that the two-child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped – which would help many children and households in Kirklees;
 - 2) Further, instruct the Chief Executive to write to all MPs covering Kirklees Council's area, asking them to commit their public support to the campaign to end the cruel two child limit to benefit payments;
 - 3) Ensure the number of children a family has is considered when a hardship grant is given out by the Council.”
-

22: Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as to Disabled Bus Access

To consider the following Motion in the names of Councillors J C Lawson and A C Pinnock;

“This Council notes:

- 1) The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) is a government-backed initiative that offers free local bus travel in England for people over the State Pension age and people with eligible disabilities. However, the scheme is typically only available to individuals with disabilities outside of peak hours, from 9.30am to 11pm on weekdays, and all day on weekends and bank holidays;
- 2) Local areas can offer discretionary concessions beyond the rules set by the ENCTS, including extending free bus travel on weekdays before 9.30am. Locally, the ENCTS scheme is administered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, but Kirklees and West Yorkshire currently does not offer free travel before 9.30am for most disabled bus pass holders;
- 3) The Kirklees Transport Strategy (2025) commits to improving accessibility and promoting inclusive, sustainable transport options for all residents;
- 4) Disabled bus pass holders make up about 10% of all concessionary users in England;
- 5) The Bus Services (No. 2) Bill is a major piece of legislation

which is currently progressing through Parliament, aiming to improve the performance, accessibility and quality of bus services across England. Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Harrogate and Knaresborough, Tom Gordon, submitted an amendment to the Bill and called on the Government to give disabled people the freedom to travel at any time. The amendment received support from over 75 MPs, disability charities and campaign groups. However, the proposal to remove the 11pm – 09.30am exception to free travel for Disabled people was voted down.

This Council believes that:

- 1) These restrictions disproportionately affect disabled people who need to travel early for work, education, healthcare or caring responsibilities. Disabled people should have the freedom to travel at any time of day, just as non-disabled people do;
- 2) Time restrictions on concessionary travel create a postcode lottery and undermine efforts to promote equality, independence, and inclusion;
- 3) Removing these restrictions would support disabled residents in accessing employment, education, healthcare, and social opportunities.

This Council, therefore, resolves:

- 1) Request that the Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State for Transport to express disappointment at the Government's decision to turn their backs on disabled people as part of the Commons vote in September this year. This undermines their commitment to accessibility and equality. The Government needs to rethink their decision and remove the discriminatory restrictions to help create a system that allows everyone to make the journeys they want to. Removing the time restrictions could also open up work and training opportunities for disabled people, allowing them to travel with freedom, ease and confidence.
- 2) Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Elected Mayor of West Yorkshire, to ask the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to extend the local ENCTS scheme to allow 24/7 free bus travel for all eligible disabled passholders across the region."

By Order of the Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Mawson', written in a cursive style.

Steve Mawson
Chief Executive