

## **Council – 21 February 2023**

### **18. Motions Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

**Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Anne Winter, to move under Notice duly given as follows:**

#### **Extending Free School Meals to support health, wellbeing and learning**

Council believes that:

1. The government must support the health and wellbeing of children to ensure they are able to make the most of the opportunities which are open to them.
2. Children cannot learn properly if they are undernourished or hungry.
3. Schools are seeing growing evidence of pupils coming to school without having eaten breakfast, unable to pay for school meals or with empty lunchboxes.
4. For a growing number of children, the school dinner is the only proper meal they will eat during a day.
5. The current system of Free School Meals is unfit for purpose and makes it difficult for those in insecure employment to sustain a claim.
6. The growing cost of living emergency makes action to support disadvantaged children urgent.

Council therefore believes that free school meals should be extended to all children in primary education and to all secondary school aged children whose families receive Universal Credit, as well as promoting school breakfast clubs.

Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Education Select Committee and the three MPs representing areas within the District to ask them to support this policy and to press for its rapid adoption through secondary legislation.

#### **Motion 2**

**Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford, to move under Notice duly given as follows:**

#### **Equitable access to identification to enable voting**

Council believes that the Elections Act 2022 will make considerable unnecessary changes to the conduct and administration of elections.

Council further believes that the Act will reduce the likelihood and ability of certain disadvantaged groups to vote without any gains in electoral security or in tackling many fundamental issues with our electoral law.

Council understands that implementing the Act will cost every Local Authority a large sum in set-up costs and increasing running costs for elections every year, for no gain to the electors of this District.

Council is particularly concerned that the list of identification permitted to be used at polling stations is discriminatory towards young people, as the range of passes allowed is much smaller than for senior citizens. This is likely to deter young voters from voting and make it less likely that they will vote later in their lives.

Council believes that identification widely used by young people should be added to the list, including (but not exclusively): an 18+ bus pass, a Young Person's Railcard, a student ID card or NUS card or an 18+ Oyster Card.

Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Cabinet Minister and the three MPs representing areas within the District to ask them to support this policy and to press for its speedy incorporation into the guidance for the next set of elections in May 2023

### **Motion 3**

**Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Phil Williams, to move under Notice duly given as follows:**

Council recognises that Mount Vernon Hospital, a major healthcare facility for Three Rivers' residents (and others in West Herts), especially those needing treatment for cancer, is just a short distance across the boundary between Three Rivers and Greater London.

This Council welcomes the exclusion of Mount Vernon Hospital from the proposed ULEZ charge, and that the Mayor appears to have taken some account of the representations that this Council made in March 2022 to them on the expansion, as this would place an unfair and an unreasonable burden on local residents, who may be required to visit daily and are unable to switch to less polluting vehicles or accessible public transport and therefore:

Agrees to write to the Mayor to:

1. Confirm that Mount Vernon site and access road to it will not be included in future charging scheme. Requests the Mayor consider the effects on residents who due to health, employment or carer requirements are required to regularly enter the expanded ULEZ and who likely to be low paid in receipt of benefits and how the proposed expansion and its regulations maybe revised to assist them.
2. Confirm support for the demands that better, cheaper and improved public transport for those on the London fringes such as Three Rivers is required and that this should include re-zoning travel zones so that would complement any UELZ expansion

### **Motion 4**

**Councillor Reena Ranger, seconded by Councillor Ciaran Reed, to move under Notice duly given as follows:**

Council notes that on 4 March 2022 the Mayor of London announced his plan to expand the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from its current boundary of the North and South Circulars to cover almost all of Greater London. These plans would see the ULEZ expanded by 29th August 2023 to the border of Three Rivers.

Council notes that, whilst the ULEZ was originally introduced covering the same area and with the same boundaries as the Congestion Charge Zone, on 25th October 2021 it was expanded by 18 times its original size to its current boundaries. Council therefore notes that this significant change took place less than a year ago and that the ramifications have yet to be fully assessed.

Council notes that expansion would mean that those with non-compliant

vehicles would pay £12.50 per day to drive within the ULEZ. Some of our residents would be forced to pay more to get to visit their doctor, dentist, drop or collect small children from school or nursery, work, visit friends and family and local businesses and high streets. This could cost jobs, damage the social fabric of the local area, and encourage businesses to locate elsewhere.

Council notes this would be a regressive tax and those with less choice disproportionately penalised. Council further notes that this expansion would mean many more areas with poor public transport would be included within the zone; this is fundamentally unfair on those residents, who would be unable to afford to keep or replace their car and would thus be forced to rely on inadequate levels of public transport.

Therefore, Council opposes measures to push up the cost of living in Three Rivers by imposing taxes and charges on residents who rely on motor vehicles without providing them with realistic alternatives and have no democratic option to oppose this.

Council notes that the Mayor of London has set aside almost £400 million towards expanding the ULEZ and related projects, and suggests this money would be better spent on such measures as:

- a faster upgrade to a zero-emission bus fleet.
- increasing the roll out of rapid charging points.
- encouraging more freight consolidation schemes.
- bringing back the previous Boiler Cashback Scheme to encourage Londoners to upgrade their boilers to reduce household emissions
- financing a generous scrappage scheme to support Londoners in replacing their vehicles

This Council calls on the Leader to send a letter to the Mayor of London calling on him to withdraw his planned ULEZ expansion and instead, to focus the almost £400 million that he has set aside for it on fairer and more effective ways of improving London's air quality.

## **Motion 5**

**Councillor Abbas Merali, seconded by Councillor Philip Hearn, to move under Notice duly given as follows:**

Three Rivers District Council recognises the important place that local sports clubs have for the communities in Three Rivers.

Three Rivers District Council believes that local sports clubs provide great social and health benefits to the community, increasing participating in physical activity and providing locations and activities that bring people together for a common purpose.

Three Rivers District Council further supports the independence of local sports clubs as excellent examples of the community self-organising.

Three Rivers District Council therefore understands that it should be an objective of the council to support local sports clubs and ensure their long-term financial viability.

Three Rivers District Council supports the Government's new funding to invest in grassroots football facilities to ensure that local clubs across the country can flourish,

with a further £168 million being invested into facilities in England by 2025, on top of a continued £18 million annually.

Three Rivers District Council commits to support local sports clubs across the District by highlighting grants available to them and providing advice on how to apply for grants as well as to consider favourably funding applications including CIL applications, from this council.