

Council

17 October 2022

Motions (2 total)

Motion A	Proposed by: Councillor Paul Baker	Seconded by: Councillor Max Wilkinson
	<p data-bbox="393 430 1240 497">Supporting Proportional Representation for UK General Elections</p> <p data-bbox="393 539 729 571">This Council notes that:</p> <p data-bbox="393 613 1279 718">The First Past The Post (FPTP) electoral system originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.</p> <p data-bbox="393 760 1295 938">In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use the archaic, single-round FPTP system for general elections while Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.</p> <p data-bbox="393 980 1229 1121">PR ensures that all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match the votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation.</p> <p data-bbox="393 1163 1252 1268">MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation, and increasing levels of ownership of decisions taken.</p> <p data-bbox="393 1310 1240 1451">PR would also end minority rule. In 2019 43.6% of the vote provided one party with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents ‘wrong winner’ elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.</p> <p data-bbox="393 1493 1276 1598">PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and should be extended to elections to the Westminster Parliament.</p> <p data-bbox="393 1640 1260 1780">Council therefore resolves to request that the Chief Executive writes to the relevant minister in the Cabinet Office urging the bringing forward of legislation to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general elections.</p>	

Motion B	Proposed by: Councillor Tabi Joy	Seconded by: Councillor Wendy Flynn
<p>Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Severn Wye Energy Agency estimates around 14,000 Cheltenham households could experience fuel poverty this year. · Cold homes and fuel poverty contribute to the phenomenon of excess winter deaths. England saw an estimated 63,000 excess winter deaths in 2020-21, 10% of which have been directly attributed to fuel poverty. (Institute of Health Equity). · CBC is working with organisations including Vision 21, Severn Wye Energy Agency, Planet Cheltenham and Cheltenham Zero to alleviate fuel poverty, but acknowledges that the work currently planned will not be enough to prevent serious hardship and exacerbate health inequalities, especially in the immediate future. · According to FOtE, 57% of homes in Cheltenham are rated EPC D to G, and as such are not sufficiently energy-efficient. Around 9,300 homes across Cheltenham would benefit significantly from free loft insulation, and around 9,800 would benefit from free cavity wall insulation. The government recommends that all homes be EPC C or above by 2035. To achieve that target, at least 3,621 homes need to be insulated per year to avoid unnecessary cold and financial hardship. · A great deal of housing stock is heritage and privately-rented, with property managers failing to upgrade them to prevent damp, mould, heat loss and electrical faults. · This Council declared a ‘Cost of Living Emergency’ in July 2022, and following from the declaration of a ‘Climate Emergency’ in 2019, must aim to end fuel poverty in the area by 2030, in a way that also reduces domestic energy use and helps meet climate commitments. <p>This Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enforce existing regulations on energy efficiency and property standards, particularly in the private rented sector. 2. Aim to maximise the incomes of low-income households through the efficient delivery of Council-administered benefits, a sensitive approach to debt recovery and the provision of accessible advice and support through a wide range of 		

channels.

3. Create support systems for private renters to ensure their housing rights are being fulfilled.

4. Publish a statement of intent and set locally appropriate eligibility criteria to access Energy Company Obligation funding via the Local Authority Flexibility arrangements.

5. Take immediate-impact measures to assess and improve the energy efficiency of Cheltenham Borough Homes housing stock.

Further, Council requests that officers:

- Report on progress made on ending fuel poverty to the Overview and Scrutiny committee every six months.
- Sign Cheltenham Borough Council up to the End Fuel Poverty Coalition.

Council also requests that the Leader of the Council writes to the HM Treasury asking for funding to upgrade homes.