

Labour Group Motion to Full Council, 12 February 2025

Changes to the state pension triple lock and protecting pensioners from poverty

This Council Notes:

- The recent comments on 16th January 2025 by the Leader of the Conservative Party and Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, the Rt.Hon. Kemi Badenoch MP saying her party wants to explore greater means-testing of government support.

- Ms Badenoch also stated that the United Kingdom, like other Western nations, faced a "structural problem" because people were living longer while having fewer children. Ms Badenoch added that "serious thinking" was required to address the financial impact of more government spending "on later life".

- Asked whether this included the triple lock policy - under which state pension payments go up every year by the highest of inflation, average earnings or 2.5% - she replied: "That's exactly the sort of thing that the policy work we are going to be doing will look at".

- To means test pensioners in receipt of the State Pension Credit could cut support from thousands of pensioners in the Ancient and Loyal Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

- The significant role that the State Pension plays in helping older residents of our Loyal and Ancient Borough and across the United Kingdom afford quality of life during retirement or when many are no longer able to find employment.

- That the State Pension is not a benefit – it is a vital lifeline and is funded from personal contributions made by citizens right across the United Kingdom through National Insurance.

- The compelling widespread concern these comments have caused pensioners, including the social injustice and potential health risks that would be caused by this for policy change.

- The additional strain these comments will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible.

This Council Believes:

- That the State Pension is not a benefit and should not be means tested. Further that the state pension has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.

This Council Resolves:

- To ask the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to write jointly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt. Hon. Rachel Reeves MP requesting a commitment to the Pension Triple Lock.
- To ask the Leader and Chief Executive to jointly write to Hon. Adam Jogle MP and the other Members of Parliament representing the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme in Parliament, calling on them to support the Triple Lock commitment and denounce the comments from the Leader of the Opposition.

Proposed Cllr Mike Stubbs

Seconded Cllr Rebekah Lewis