

## Agenda Item 19:

### Motions submitted for debate at the Council meeting on 1 December 2022

#### (a) The following Motion has been submitted in the name of Councillor Jeff Brooks:

##### Support the Watermill Theatre

*"The Council notes that The Watermill Theatre has lost its National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status and, as a result, will lose a grant of £450,000 per annum from the Arts Council. This is 14% of its annual turnover.*

*The award-winning Watermill Theatre is a major part of our District's provision of performing arts, especially working with young people. It developed a Youth Advisory Board helping to create opportunities to perform on The Watermill stage with a fully-supported production by The Youth Ensemble every season. From early years to higher education, there is something for everyone. The Watermill engages with schools in many ways, including running workshops, backstage tours and theatre visits and providing educational resources, work experience, teacher training, CPD, Arts Awards and Arts Mark support.*

*It is a vital contributor to the cultural experiences that our residents can enjoy.*

*This loss of funding threatens the Watermill's work on stage and its community engagement programme, which works with more than 20,000 people a year, including refugees, young people with autism and adults with additional needs.*

*This Council therefore resolves to write to the Arts Council and the District's three MPs, in support of the Watermill Theatre and ask it to re-consider its decision and consider what other funding options could be available to the Theatre".*

#### (b) The following Motion has been submitted in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs:

##### Insulation

##### **"Overview:**

*Council acknowledges that this year, especially, the most vulnerable in West Berkshire will still be struggling to choose between heating or eating. People living in poorly insulated properties are in an even worse situation, because the poorer the insulation the more it costs to heat the same size space.*

*This motion commits West Berkshire Council to take a bold step in helping as many residents as possible and as rapidly as possible to have a positive impact on energy needs next winter.*

##### *Council notes:*

- That we declared a climate emergency across the district, and we need to make progress on our district target as a matter of urgency.*
- That the better a property is insulated the lower the need for any kind of heating.*
- That for any insulation scheme, there will be a shortage of skills needed to implement the scheme.*
- That many believe the costs of fossil fuel will not return fully to previous levels for many years, if ever.*

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- *That better insulation is one of the best ways to jump up from a D or E to a C EPC rating.*

### ***In order to help:***

*This Council will introduce a scheme which will begin by focusing on those who cannot afford to undertake basic insulation, or lack the skills, or physical ability to do it.*

*Criteria that should be met:*

- *Living in a home or flat that has an EPC of E or below;*
- *Can demonstrate to the Council that they are not in a position to:*
  - *Afford the simple steps to better insulation, in which case material will be supplied;*
  - *Afford the simple steps to better insulation and don't have the skills to implement, in which case, materials will be provided and a ½ day course made available for them to gain the skills;*
  - *Afford the simple steps to better insulation and don't have the physical ability to undertake the work, in which case, the material would be provided, and work carried out for them.*

### **THE MOTION**

*This Council commits to:*

- *Introducing a scheme before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 in order to be able to take advantage of the Household Support Fund which has up to £421 million available.*
- *Identifying*
  - *the first 500 homes that meets the affordability and physical ability criteria.*
  - *the first 1000 homes that meets the supply and training criteria.*
  - *the first 1500 that meets the supply only criteria.*
- *Creating a directory of local tradespeople who will participate in the implementation of the scheme.*
- *Working with local education facilities (such as Newbury College) to ensure the availability of short ½ to 1 day courses for those wanting to skill-up.*
- *Ensuring those that have the greatest need are helped first.*
- *Working with both the public and private sectors to ensure anyone meeting the criteria can take advantage of the scheme (no matter who owns the property).*
- *Applying for complete funding from government to fund the project.*
- *Investigating the creation of a WBC Insulation Bond that would act as a backstop or allow for the extension of the programme dependant on the success of the grant bid.*
- *Approaching Greenham Trust to support West Berkshire Council in this program with whatever match funding they could make available”.*