

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

7 March 2017

Notices of Motion – Responses

1. Summary Statement

- 1.1 The Council regularly considers notices of motion submitted by members under Standing Order No 7.
- 1.2 In January 2017, the Council supported a motion calling upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for women born on or after 6 April 1951 who had unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age.
- 1.3 A response had been received in respect of the motion, via John Spellar MP, and is appended to this report.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the response to the approved motion be received.

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3. Strategic Resource Implications

- 3.1 There are no strategic resource implications arising from this report.

4. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 4.1 Standing Order No 7 provides that any member of the Council may give notice of not more than one motion for consideration at any ordinary meeting of the Council and sets out the process for dealing with the motion. The motion can only be accepted if it relates to matters for which the Council has powers, duties and responsibility, or which affect the Borough or a part of it, or some or all of its citizens.

5. Implications for the Scorecard Priorities

- 5.1 Councillors submitting these motions are demonstrating their local leadership role, acting as a voice for their local community and expressing local concerns.

6. Background Details

State Pension Arrangements

- 6.1 Council at its meeting on 17 January 2017 agreed the following motion in relation to state pension arrangements:

“This Council calls upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age with lack of appropriate notification.

Whilst accepting that retirement ages for women and men should be the same, this Council believes that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient notice being given to the women affected, leaving women with no time to make alternative arrangements.

The Council notes that up to 18,000 women in Sandwell have had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 with little or no personal notification of the changes. Some women had only two years notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age.

Many Sandwell women born in the 1950s are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are already out of the labour market, caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace and so struggle to find employment.

Women born in this decade are suffering financially and now face the loss of up to £40,000 in pension income. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure when reaching 60.

The Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.”