

Minutes



Formal Council Questions and Responses

Date: 11 July 2022

1 **Question to the Leader: 2022/07 - Future Plans to Mitigate The Impact of the Living Crisis**

Councillor K. Whitehead asked:

It was refreshing to read that the Leader of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Councillor Steve Thomas, while discussing the future and the cost of living crisis, made a bold decision to mitigate its impact. I have pasted some content below and wonder if our own Leader would consider following his lead? I believe it would be a very popular move by our authority if we followed suit.

A controversial topic during the last six months was that some council staff were missing out on the Welsh Government NHS and Social Care Financial Recognition £735 scheme payment. Councillor Thomas wanted staff from workforce development, early years childcare and play, families first, and Flying Start departments that are all part of the councils' social services directorate and did not receive payment from Welsh Government's NHS and Social Care Financial Recognition Scheme to receive a payment of £735 from the council. They had originally qualified for government payments in April, but the guidance subsequently changed.

The Leader responded:

The recognition payment was based on criteria set by Welsh Government. All Council staff responded flexibly to the significant challenges brought about by the pandemic, working tirelessly to maintain continuity of Council services and providing support to the City's residents. Introducing a localised 'top-up' scheme, over and above the national recognition scheme would have created issues across the wider workforce, as well as reducing the availability of funding to support other areas of need as the economy and our communities recover from the pandemic.

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