

COUNCIL		
Report Title	Motion 6 in the name of Councillor Elliott to be seconded by Councillor Michael	
Key Decision		Item No.
Ward		
Contributors	Chief Executive (Head of Business & Committee)	
Class	Part 1	Date: January 20 2016

“This Council Notes –

- a recent court defeat suffered by the government has highlighted the unfair impact the current, and future, benefits cap will have on already struggling carers. The European Court of Justice ruled that primary care givers who received carers allowance should be exempt from the benefits cap, which currently limits the amount a family can receive to £26,000 a year. This is set to be further reduced to £23,000 in London.
- the Judge, Mr Justice Collins deemed the government’s decision discriminatory; he went on to highlight that neither in the impact statement nor what was put before parliament raised the effect on the disabled of a loss of a family carer.
- many primary care givers, the majority of whom are women, feel that they are facing a form of ‘discrimination by association’, as the current policy recognises those on disability benefits, but fails to exempt people caring for members of their own family who may live in a different property.
- the Chief Executive of Carers UK stated that many carers who provide substantial care to a loved one are struggling to make ends meet, with additional financial worries impacting on their own health. All this in spite of the fact that the economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is estimated to be £119bn per year.
- a past survey by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers found that 53% had borrowed money as a result of their caring role, with 61% having borrowed from a friend or relative and 41% using their overdraft.
- the Disability Benefits Consortium is warning the government that their continued policy is likely to force even more disabled people and their carers to rely on foodbanks. The government’s emphasis appears to be focussed on the legality of implementing the benefits cap rather than on how it is excluding full time carers who already make an immense contribution to the government, health service and their disabled loved ones.

The Council resolves –

to show our support for the 7 million UK carers by opposing the unfair benefits cap on full-time carers and join organisations and individuals by lobbying Members of Parliament to amend the Welfare Reform and Work Bill in this regard.”