

Motion to: Council

30 January 2024

Subject: Giving Norwich's children the best start in life

Proposer: Councillor Lubbock

Seconder: Councillor Ackroyd

The two-child benefit cap, which prevents parents from claiming child tax credit or universal credit for more than two children, was introduced by the Conservative Government in 2017.

Analysis by the Child Poverty Action Group shows that 900,000 children living in poverty in England do not currently qualify for free school meals because the Conservative Government introduced an arbitrary £7,400 household income threshold in 2018.

The Norfolk and Waveney Area in which Norwich lies for the provision of health services, has the highest rate of malnutrition in the entire country according to a Future Health report entitled 'In Plain Sight'. The report found that the region has a malnourishment rate of 6.7% compared with a national average for England of 5%. The report analysed the growing problem of malnourishment and its impact on the health system, putting Norfolk and Waveney near the top of a separate chart for hospital admissions for malnutrition.

A recent report from a headteacher in West Earlham revealed the impact of primary children arriving at school hungry and under nourished and suffering vitamin deficiencies.

A new report by the Commons Education Select Committee warns mental health problems and cost-of-living pressures on families are among the complex reasons for increased absenteeism.

Scrapping the two-child limit is the most cost-effective way to reduce child poverty. It would lift 250,000 out of poverty and mean 850,000 children are in less deep poverty.

Council **RESOLVES** to call on the UK Government to scrap the two-child benefit cap. Ask the Council Leader to write to Members of Parliament, Chloe Smith and Clive Lewis representing Norwich, expressing the Council's support for the scrapping of the two-child benefit cap.