



## **Community Briefing – 13 March 2023**

### **Opportunities to get involved and provide your views**

#### **New! - Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs**

We want to hear your views about the proposals for the new Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs in Skelmersdale and Ormskirk.

You can have your say on things like site location and facilities through the online consultation visit: <https://dppukltd.com/ormskirk> or <https://dppukltd.com/skelmersdale>

Or you can attend an in-person consultation:

- ✚ Monday 13 March, 18:30 – 20:00 Park Pool and Nye Bevan
- ✚ Tuesday 14 March, 17:00 – 20:00 Park Pool and Nye Bevan
- ✚ Wednesday 15 March, 09:00 – 14:00 Park Pool and Nye Bevan
- ✚ Friday 17 March, 10:00 – 14:00, Concourse, ground floor
- ✚ Saturday 18 March, 10:00-14:00 Ormskirk Market, Moor Street
- ✚ Thursday 23 March, 10:00 – 14:00 Ormskirk Market, Moor Street

#### **Tenant Satisfaction Survey**

Are you a tenant living in a West Lancashire Borough Council home? If you are then we would like to hear your views on the housing services, we offer.

To do this we are asking tenants to take part in our **Tenant Satisfaction Survey**. The survey is designed to find out how tenants feel about the services they receive and the things they think could be improved.

Please take this opportunity to have your say before **24 March 2023**. Visit our engagement platform *Your Voice...West Lancashire* to participate:

<https://letstalkwestlancashire.uk.engagementhq.com/hub-page/tenant-hub>

## **Housing Allocations Policy Review**

Feedback has now been analysed and used to frame the new Allocations Policy to ensure the process is fair, open, and transparent. West Lancashire Borough Council are now inviting residents to view the revised draft policy in order to check it's clear and easy to understand.

Please take this opportunity to let us know the new policy is clear to you by **22 March 2023**. Visit our engagement platform *Your Voice...West Lancashire* to participate: <https://letstalkwestlancashire.uk.engagementhq.com/hub-page/tenant-hub>

## **Updates from West Lancashire Borough Council**

### **May Elections – Voter ID guidance**



Elections are happening across England on 4 May 2023 and voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections

This will apply to:

- Local elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections
- Recall petitions

From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections

If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

For more information about the types of accepted ID or how to apply for a free voter ID document visit: [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id)

### **Government Energy Bill Support Schemes – Alternative Funding**

The government has announced two new schemes which will be available for those households who are not entitled to the £400 discount via the Energy Support Scheme.

#### **Scheme One - Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding**

This Energy Bill Support Scheme is intended to provide £400 of support for households across the UK that would otherwise miss out on the first part of the Energy Bill Support Scheme, as they do not have a domestic electricity contract. E.g., those who may pay for energy through a landlord and have no direct bill.

The government will be opening the scheme for applications from 27 February 2023 via: <http://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>

## **Scheme Two - Alternative Fuel Payments**

This scheme is also intended to deliver a one-off payment of £200 to UK households who are not on the mains gas grid and therefore use alternative fuels, such as heating oil, to heat their homes.

The government will be opening the scheme for applications from 6 March 2023 via: [www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic](http://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic)

## **Funding Opportunities - Cost of Living Support Hub**

We have gathered information on the range of support available from the Council and wider organisations that can help people plan for winter.

Visit our Cost of Living Support Hub for more information on things like help with energy costs, financial and food support and debt help - [www.westlancs.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/costofliving)

## **Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme**

The Council has funding to assist council taxpayers who are experiencing severe financial difficulties due to high energy bills. Visit our website for more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply - [www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-payment-difficulties](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-payment-difficulties)

## **Discretionary housing payments**

Discretionary housing payments can help people who need extra support with their rent when their housing benefit or universal credit housing costs do not meet the full value of their rent. If you are suffering severe financial hardship as a result, or your tenancy is at risk, you may be able to get a discretionary payment to help.

Visit our website for more information, eligibility criteria and how to apply - [www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/benefits/discretionary-housing-payments)

## **Warm & Welcome Spaces - West Lancs**

As part of the government's Warm and Welcome Spaces initiative, [Lancashire County Council](#) libraries will become warm and welcome spaces over the winter months where people can shelter and get information and advice.

To find your nearest warm space visit: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/cost-of-living/warm-and-welcome-places/](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/cost-of-living/warm-and-welcome-places/)

## **Grants online**

[Grants Online](#) is the UK's most comprehensive and up to date UK grant funding information service. Updated on daily bases, Grants Online informs you of grant funding opportunities from the European Union, UK Government Agencies, the Lottery as well as Grant Making Trusts & Foundations.

For more information visit website: [www.grantsonline.org.uk](http://www.grantsonline.org.uk) where you can:

- register for grant funding alerts
- subscribe to their free monthly E-newsletter and keep up to date on latest funding opportunities
- use their grant finder search, where you can filter by region, category and agency/organisation

## **Energy Bills Support Scheme – Beware of scams!**

The government is urging consumers to stay alert to potential energy bills support scheme scams and report these to the relevant authorities. If individuals receive a message that asks for their bank details or to click on a link, it is very important that they report it promptly.

Individuals are encouraged to send a screen shot of the message to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and to [energy.bills.rebate@beis.gov.uk](mailto:energy.bills.rebate@beis.gov.uk)

## **Learn my way**

Getting online can help you to save money, find work, stay in touch with friends and family and much more. But it can be daunting and hard to know where to start.

Learn My Way has free courses for you to learn digital skills to stay safe and connected.

Visit [Learn my Way website](#), where you will be able to access content such as:

- Using the internet
- Video calling
- Online shopping
- Online safety
- Job finding
- Accessing GP services
- Online banking and much more



## Wellbeing Updates

### New! - Covid Spring Boosters

From 12 April 2023 a Covid-19 vaccination helpline has been set-up for citizens to gain the following:

- Help in accessing information about the Covid 19 vaccine.
- Assistance in finding a local vaccination service.
- Support in booking a vaccination appointment.

The helpline: **0300 7906 856** is available between 9.00am and 17.00pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)

### NHS Healthy Start



The NHS Healthy Start scheme helps young families and those who are pregnant to access healthy food, milk, and vitamins via a prepaid card.

Eligible people can apply for the scheme online or if they cannot apply online can call 0300 330 7010.

Eligibility for the scheme depends on the benefit the person receives and what their income is.

For more information [visit: www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)