

Two Child Benefit Cap

Proposer: Cllr James Brown

Seconder: Cllr Martin Christopher

The Council notes:

- The Two Child limit to benefit payments was introduced by the Conservative Government in 2017.
- 1.5 million children in the UK live in households subject to the two-child limit on benefit payments. That is roughly one-in-ten children in the UK.
- In 2023/24 the two-child limit cost families up to £3,235 per child each year.
- There is a strong correlation between families affected by the two-child limit and those who are living in poverty.
- The percentage of children living in low-income families in Lincoln in 2023 was found to be above the rate for England overall.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty overnight, and significantly reduce the level of poverty that a further 850,000 children live in.
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- That scrapping the two-child limit would cost £1.3 billion, however it is estimated that child poverty costs the economy £39 billion each year. *
- In Lincoln, 2,695 children are currently affected by the two-child limit to benefit payments. That is 14% of all children in the local authority area. At the same time 6,858 local children are living in poverty. *
- Most families receiving Universal Credit are in work and many are struggling for reasons beyond their control – such as a family break-up, the death of a partner or losing a job.
- The stance of the Labour Government who are committed to keeping the cap – going as far as suspending the whip from MPs who rebelled against this position.

The Council believes that:

- The two-child limit to benefit payments is a cruel and harmful policy that should be scrapped. Research from the University of York has shown its introduction has had no positive impacts on employment and earnings. Instead, it has dragged thousands of local families into poverty.

Council resolves:

- That the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating the City of Lincoln Council's strong belief that the two child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped – which would help 2,695 children living in Lincoln.

- That the Leader of the Council writes to Hamish Falconer, Member of Parliament for Lincoln, asking him to commit his public support to the campaign to end the cruel two child limit to benefit payments.
- To ensure the number of children a family has is considered when a hardship grant is given out by the council.

*Research conducted by the End Child Poverty Coalition