

[Co Londonderry farmer fined for water pollution offence that led to a fish kill](#)

A County Londonderry farmer, Richard Mulholland (40) from Ballymacpeake Road, Portglenone was convicted today at Coleraine Magistrates' Court for a water pollution offence.

[Angler fined for having unlawful possession of sea trout](#)

A Coleraine angler was convicted today at Coleraine Magistrates Court residing at Ballymena Magistrates Court for several fishing offences and fined a total of £240, which included a £15 offender levy.

[Green Party calls for insulation grants to help small businesses survive cost of living crisis](#)



2 December 2022

The Green Party of England and Wales is calling on government to offer a Small Business Saturday reprieve to firms facing soaring costs through insulation grants and a package of support measures.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“We know from visiting independent businesses and social enterprises up and down the country that they want to green their operations, improve employee welfare and make it easier for people to shop locally.

“But they need government to get behind them and offer the right package of incentives.

“Businesses tell our councillors that they want government insulation grants, reform of business rates to incentivise greener business practices, differential VAT rates to favour small businesses, and an immediate suspension of Covid-loan repayments.

“Small and independent businesses and enterprises are the lifeblood of local communities. Small businesses can help revitalise our high streets.

“Yet, many are struggling with the cost of living and high energy bills. Running costs are set to increase again in March when the government’s short-term support will end.

“The Green Party has long been the party of small business. We want to see them thrive.”

This Small Business Saturday the Green Party are calling for:

1. Grants to insulate small businesses to cut energy bills and emissions. Government should provide businesses with grants to insulate their premises to reduce their running costs, energy use, and emissions for good.
2. Higher business rate exemption for small businesses that green their operations. Businesses should be incentivised to green their operations by not having to pay higher business rates as a result of taking sustainable measures such as installing solar panels.
3. Support for small businesses to improve employee wellbeing. Government must support businesses to improve the wellbeing of their employees. Measures should include exempting all childcare providers in England from business rates.
4. Reform of VAT to support small businesses and suspension of Covid repayments. The government must reform our VAT system so that it differentially supports smaller shops and businesses compared to larger and online businesses. Likewise, there should be an immediate suspension of Covid loan repayments to provide much needed relief for businesses.
5. Creation of Virtual High Streets. Councils should work with small and independent businesses so residents can use an online portal to buy from participating local shops and have items delivered on the same or next day.

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Green councillors call on Michael Gove to properly fund local services



2 December 2022

Green councillors in ruling administrations in England and Wales have written to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, calling on him “to ensure proper funding of local services and... sound policy that works for people, not profit.”

The Green cabinet members and committee chairs who have signed the letter have called for a three-year funding settlement, an increase in all council budgets in line with inflation, an increase in investment for retrofitting homes and in services for the most vulnerable, particularly adult and child social care.

In the letter, the councillors say: “It makes no financial sense to cut local government funding to the point where they can no longer deliver even basic services.”

They urge Mr Gove to “join local government in working to protect the most vulnerable and build resilient, joyful communities, so we can serve our communities in the way they deserve and give them hope for the future.”

Co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, who is a councillor in Bristol, said:

“Councils are at breaking point. Several, including Tory controlled Councils, are on the verge of bankruptcy. Michael Gove must listen, not just to the strong chorus from Councils run by opposition parties, but also to Tory councillors.

“The Conservative head of the Local Government Association has said: ‘the numbers just do not add up,’ and added: ‘We desperately need to protect budgets and services from the impact of inflation, without which there will be real service cuts to some of the most vulnerable in our communities.’ [1].

“As councillors, we work hard to build communities that are fairer, greener and healthier. We work to support local businesses, deliver vital services and protect and improve local environments.

“In order to do so effectively, councils need a guarantee from Michael Gove that we will receive an increase in all council budgets in line with inflation and a three-year funding settlement.

“We need that funding certainty so we can increase investment in adult and child social care. We need it to fund the insulation of our homes to make

them warmer and cheaper for residents to run.

“If Michael Gove is really committed to levelling up, to decent housing and building strong communities, he must listen to councils and act.”

NOTES:

[1]

<https://www.local.gov.uk/events/past-event-presentations/lga-annual-conference-2022/lga-chairman-cllr-james-jamieson-welc>

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Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics released

The 2021/22 Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management annual statistics report has been published today by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).