

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD – 2 SEPTEMBER 2019

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

BUSINESS RATES RELIEF SHORT SHARP REVIEW

At the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting held on 2 September 2019, Board Members considered a report on the Business Rates Relief Short Sharp Review, **Appendix 1**, which was carried out following a referral made by Council on 21 November 2018, when a Notice of Motion was put forward by Councillor M. Thompson. The amended and approved Motion is detailed below:-

“In 2017 the Chancellor committed a £435m business rate relief package intended on helping high street businesses. The Communities Secretary at that time, Sajid Javid, promised ‘absolutely no delay’ in allocating and using the money. However, a table of ‘worst offending councils’ shows that Bromsgrove District Council failed to spend almost 70% of their grant”.

The Overview & Scrutiny Board RECOMMEND that:-

- a) **The Section 151 Officer uses her delegated powers to use the 2018/19 balance for business scheme and reflects this in the allocation for subsequent years.**

COUNCIL PLAN

At the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting held on 2 September 2019, Board Members pre-scrutinised the Council Plan, **Appendix 2**, whereby Members made minor changes to some of the wording used within the Plan.

The Overview & Scrutiny Board RECOMMEND that the following wording be included / changed within the Council Plan as follows:-

- a) **Work and financial independence – Ensure people get the benefits they need – amend the measure to read:
“Number of emergency Essential Living Fund payments”.
“Number of emergency Discretionary Housing payments”.**
- b) **Live independent, active & healthy lives – Why? – amend to read:
“Increasing numbers of people living with reduced mobility, dementia and diabetes are a particular issue for the District”.**
- c) **Affordable & sustainable homes – Priority: A balanced housing market – include this priority within the “We will” and “How we will measure progress” section.**
- d) **An effective & sustainable Council – amend “Sustainability – We Will” to read:

“Focus more on commercialisation of services, where appropriate, maximising every opportunity to generate income”.**