

Recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 17th January 2024

1. Planning Enforcement Policy

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Council endorse the Planning Enforcement Policy.

2. Council Tax Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Policy - Council Section 13a1(C) Policy

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Section 13A(1)(C) policy be approved and adopted from 1st April 2024.
- 2) The Council's scheme of delegation be amended to grant delegated authority to the Head of Finance and Customer Services, and the Financial Support Manager to reduce the Council Tax payable on a case by case basis, as provided by Section 13A 1 (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3. Council Tax - Empty Homes Discounts and Premiums

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) From 1st April 2024, under section 11B(1) of the local government finance act 1992, for long-term empty dwellings the discount under section 11(2)(a) will not apply and the additional council tax premium applied will be:
 - i) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for less than 5 years – 100% premium.
 - ii) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 5 years or more, but less than 10 years – 200% premium.
 - iii) For a dwelling that has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 10 years or more – 300% premium.
- 2) The Head of Financial and Customer Services on a case-by-case basis may consider a reduction to the long-term empty premium under section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4. Final Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The council tax reduction scheme is retained for 2024-25 tax year, subject to uprating of income bands by 6.7% as set out in the table at appendix a.

5. Planning and Environmental Enforcement Business Case

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) The Business case be pursued with the intention to bring together the enforcement functions within Environmental Services and Planning and associated current budget within the Shared Regulatory Service provided by WRS;
- 2) An additional £93,600 annually from existing resources be agreed to fund the service to meet the level of demand in Planning Enforcement;
- 3) An additional £55,590 be agreed to fund 1.6 FTE additional (Grade 6) resource to support the work in tackling the backlog of Planning Enforcement cases for the next two years only;
- 4) An additional £7,537.50 be agreed to fund 0.25 FTE additional (Grade 4) resource for the customer service resource element of fly-tipping, littering and enviro-crime; and
- 5) An additional £21,650 be agreed to fund 0.5 FTE additional (Grade 6) resource to support the work on enforcement of fly-tipping, littering and enviro-crime.

6. Medium Term Financial Plan Tranche 1 2024/5 to 2026/7 (following consultation)

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) Council endorse the inputs into the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan as at the start of October 2023, and the associated risks and opportunities.
- 2) Council note that these inputs have been used, along with the 2023/24-25/26 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) agreed by Council in February 2023, to project an initial "gap" to be closed.
- 3) An initial Tranche of savings proposals, as set out in Section 3.12 - 3.25 and the associated Savings Proposal Document in Appendix A, as published on the 14th November 2023, and considered by Cabinet in January 2024, be approved at Council on the 24th January 2024.

- 4) Fees and charges are increased by 7% as part of this process.
- 5) Commercial fees and charges, as set out in Appendix F are approved.
- 6) Council note that Tranche 2 of this process will add further information such as the Local Government Settlement to give a final financial position for the Council.