

Meeting: Council

Date: 10 December 2015

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Proposed Council Tax Support Scheme 2016/17

Is the decision a key decision? Yes

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

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1. Proposal and Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides members with the background of the current scheme and recommendations for the 2016/17 local Council Tax Support scheme.
- 1.2 Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 requires local authorities to annually review their local scheme.
- 1.3 Within the scheme Personal Allowances and Premiums for Council Tax Support are annually updated in line with the prescribed pensioner scheme and national working-age benefits, which are both set by the Government.

2. Reason for Proposal

- 2.1 The Council must approve the final scheme by the 31st January each year, even if no changes are proposed.
- 2.2 If Personal Allowances and Premiums were not updated in line with the prescribed pensioner scheme and national working-age benefits residents would effectively have a cut in their entitlement should their income increase.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the current Council Tax Support scheme be continued without change from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

- 3.2 That Personal Allowances and Premiums for Council Tax Support are updated from 1 April 2016 in line with the prescribed pensioner scheme and national working-age benefits, which are both set by the Government.
- 3.3 That the Exceptional Hardship Fund of £80,000, which is used to top up Council Tax Support awards in appropriate cases, be continued.
- 3.4 That the Chief Accountant be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Mayor and Executive Lead for Finance and Regeneration, to make any further adjustments required to the Exceptional Hardship Policy and Fund and the Vulnerable policy.
- 3.5 That a full review of the current scheme will take place during 2016/17 to consider whether any revisions are necessary from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 that will also take into account the welfare changes announced in the 2015 Summer Budget.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Supporting information and Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 - 2015/16 Council Tax Support schemes in Devon

Appendix 3 - 2016/17 Council Tax Support schemes in Devon

Appendix 4 – Summary of Welfare Changes announced in 2015 Summer Budget

Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment Council Tax Support Scheme