

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Tuesday, 21 August 2012

Decision No: (CAB 12/13 8737)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	RESOURCES
SUBJECT:	LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - PROPOSED SCHEME FOR CONSULTATION
AUTHOR:	Paul Medland, Head of Partnership and Customer Services

THE DECISION

- (i) To note the Draft Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) Regulations (the Default Scheme Regulations) as issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government as set out in Appendix 1.
- (ii) To approve the draft Southampton City Council 'Council Tax Support Scheme' (the Default Scheme as set out in Appendix 1, with the variations and additions set out in Appendix 2) for the purpose of public consultation.
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Head of Finance and IT, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to do anything necessary to publish and consult on the draft Scheme as approved.
- (iv) To delegate authority to the Head of Finance and IT, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to amend the draft Scheme to take into account consultation responses received, Impact Assessments conducted by the Council or changes required to give effect to any new legal requirements or statutory guidance published in relation to Local Council Tax Support Schemes, prior to recommending a Scheme for approval by Council.
- (v) To note that it is proposed that a special meeting of Council will be arranged in January 2013 to agree the final scheme for implementation from 1 April 2013.
- (vi) To note the implementation timeline as set out in Appendix 5.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. Subject to the Local Government Finance Bill completing its passage through Parliament, the Council will be required to adopt a Council Tax Support Scheme by the end of January 2013. Before that it must publish a draft scheme and have consulted major preceptors and other people who may have an interest in the operation of the scheme.

2. Given the tight timescales for implementation, and the facts that legislation is not yet in place and guidance is still being received; it is necessary to allow for some flexibility in the design of the scheme and in the consultation, which is achieved by the delegation to the Head of Finance and IT in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources in recommendation (ii).

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. The option of fully or part funding the scheme to reduce the impact on households has been considered but rejected because of the financial cost and the consequent impact on other Council services.
2. Various options for the design of the Council Tax Support scheme (set out in appendix 4) have been considered and rejected as:
 - Introducing unacceptable inequalities in their impact.
 - Reducing the incentive to work or save.
 - Bringing additional financial risks.
 - Resulting in additional administration.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 21 August 2012

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Judy Cordell

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*