

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Tuesday, 15 January 2013

Decision No: (CAB 12/13 9636)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES
SUBJECT:	DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS FOR SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY PROPERTIES
AUTHOR:	ANDY LOWE

THE DECISION

- (i) Recommends that Full Council
 - (a) Approves the policy that the empty homes discount is left at 100% for Class C empty properties but that the discount is reduced from six months to one month from 1 April 2013.
 - (b) Approves the policy that the empty homes discount is reduced from 100% to 50% for Class A empty properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (c) Approves the introduction of a long term empty properties premium set at 50% from 1 April 2013.
 - (d) Approves the removal of the second home discount so that Council Tax will be payable in full on these properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (e) Approves the introduction of discretionary hardship support under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 with effect from 1 April 2013 as set out in Appendix 1.
 - (f) Delegate authority to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources to approve the NNDR 1 return for the City Council from 2013/14 and for future years.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. The new regulations contained in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 allow the Council to make significant changes to the discounts and exemptions that are currently offered on Council Tax.
2. Having considered the options presented by these changes the proposed changes will raise additional revenue for the Council and preceptors to help protect local services at a time when national funding for local Councils is being withdrawn, and should encourage bringing empty homes back into use.
3. Due to technical changes resulting from the outcome of the local government funding review, which are contained within the Local Government Finance Act 2012, the approval process for the NNDR Return

which has previously been a responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) now needs to be formally delegated by Council to the CFO.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. Clearly there are a huge number of variables and alternative options that could be implemented. Alternative packages have been considered and the key factors that have been taken into account in reaching this final set of proposals are set out in paragraph 14.
2. These proposals aim to balance increases in Council Tax income against the risk of non-collection and any possible loss of grant funding and also consider the housing needs of the City.
3. There are no alternative options to the delegation of the approval of the NNDR 1 return as the return must be completed in line with regulations. The ability of Members to directly influence the estimate of NNDR is very limited.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Councillor Williams declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as a multiple home owner in the City. He remained at the meeting.

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: 15th January 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 23 Jan 2013

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*)