

Subject:	Council Tax Reduction Review - Extract from the proceedings of the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee Meeting held on the 8 December 2016		
Date of Meeting:	15 December 2016		
Report of:	Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Ross Keatley	Tel: 29-1064
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE***Action Required of Council***

To receive the item referred from the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee for decision:

Recommendation – That Council:

- 1) Notes that the Council undertook formal consultation as a part of this review and that as part of the formal consultation a draft scheme was published and people were invited to give their views on that scheme.
- 2) Notes the outcome of that consultation (appendix 1) which has been summarised in section 5.4 of the report.
- 3) Notes that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) (appendix 2) has been undertaken on the proposed changes in the draft scheme and the recommendations in this report. It should further note that, to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, members must give conscientious consideration to the findings of this assessment when making a decision on the recommendations in 2.9.1 to 2.9.6 [5.1 – 5.6 below]. The actions which will be undertaken as a result of this EIA are set out in section 7.13.
- 4) Authorises the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to amend the council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Persons who are not Pensioners) (Brighton and Hove City Council) 2013 to reflect the changes at 2.9 to 2.9.6 of the report [5 - 5.6 below] and to take all steps necessary and incidental to the introduction of the revised scheme.

Proposed changes to scheme from 1st April 2017

- 5) Authorise the changes set out in 2.9.1 – 2.9.4 of the report [5.1 - 5.6 below] are made to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Persons who are not Pensioners) (Brighton & Hove City Council) 2013 to take effect from 1 April 2017. (These changes are set out in more detail in 4.3 of the report).

5.(1) Change the taper rate from 20p to 25p.

- 5.(2) To limit maximum CTR to the equivalent available for Band D property.
- 5.(3) Change the minimum CTR payable to £5.00 per week.
- 5.(4) For people with an entitlement to CTR on 3rd March 2017 who will be affected by the provision in 2.9.2 [5.2 above] transitional protection will be applied so that no one will be worse off by £10 or more per week as a result of this provision. This transitional protection will end either: after a year; when a person moves, or when their claim ends, whichever is soonest.
- 5.(5) As per the four year budget plan previously agreed at February 2016 Budget Council and presented in the three year saving plan on this agenda the permanent budget funding used to support the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be set at a £0.055m for 2017/18. A further £0.095m will be set aside from the Welfare Reform reserve to provide £0.150m discretionary funds overall.
- 5.(6) Amend the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Brighton & Hove City Council) 2016 so that people who would otherwise qualify for council tax reduction were it not for the provision in 2.9.3 [5.3 above] (£5.00 minimum CTR) can apply for Discretionary Council Tax Reduction.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

POLICY, RESOURCES & GROWTH COMMITTEE

4.00pm 8 DECEMBER 2016

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 3BQ

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Morgan (Chair), Hamilton (Deputy Chair), G Theobald (Opposition Spokesperson), Mac Cafferty (Group Spokesperson), Bewick, Janio, Mitchell, A Norman, Sykes and Wealls

PART ONE**80 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION REVIEW**

- 80.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Finance & Resources in relation to Council Tax Reduction Review. The Council introduced a local Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme from 1 April 2013 as a result of national changes localising the previous Council Tax Benefit (CTB) system. Under legislation the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme must be reviewed each year. The purpose of the report was to set out that review and the resulting recommendations.
- 80.2 Councillor Sykes noted that the proposals in the report would reduce the fund by approximately £335k, and expressed concern that technical measures in the policy would see a fewer number of people affected; however, the impact would be much greater on them. Whilst he commended the detailed EIA with the paper, the Green Group would be abstaining on the proposals.
- 80.3 Councillor Hamilton explained that the Administration were putting an additional £1.5M into the scheme, and as well as writing to all affected households, there would be close work with the community and voluntary sector. The proposals in the report were considered a fair compromise in the context of the very challenging budget position of the authority and the necessity to help the poorest households in the city.
- 80.4 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote. These were **carried** with 4 in support and 6 abstentions.
- 80.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee:
- 1) Notes that the Council undertook formal consultation as a part of this review and that as part of the formal consultation a draft scheme was published which contained possible changes to the scheme and people were invited to give their views on that scheme.

- 2) Notes the outcome of that consultation (appendix 1) which has been summarised in section 5.4
- 3) Notes that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) (appendix 2) has been undertaken on the possible changes set out in the draft scheme and the recommendations set out in 2.9.1 to 2.9.6 [9.1 – 9.6] in this report. The committee should further note that, to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, members must give conscientious consideration to the findings of this assessment when making a decision on the recommendations in 2.9.1 to 2.9.6. [9.1 – 9.6]. The actions which will be undertaken as a result of this EIA are set out in section 7.11.
- 4) Notes that the Executive Director of Finance and Resources will, prior to 1 April 2017, exercise delegated powers to increase the appropriate calculative elements of the scheme to give effect to national changes.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND – That Council:

- 5) Notes that the Council undertook formal consultation as a part of this review and that as part of the formal consultation a draft scheme was published and people were invited to give their views on that scheme.
- 6) Notes the outcome of that consultation (appendix 1) which has been summarised in section 5.4.
- 7) Notes that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) (appendix 2) has been undertaken on the proposed changes in the draft scheme and the recommendations in this report. It should further note that, to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, members must give conscientious consideration to the findings of this assessment when making a decision on the recommendations in 2.9.1 to 2.9.6 [9.1 – 9.6]. The actions which will be undertaken as a result of this EIA are set out in section 7.13.
- 8) Authorises the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to amend the council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Persons who are not Pensioners) (Brighton and Hove City Council) 2013 to reflect the changes at 2.9 to 2.9.6 of the report [9 - 9.6 below] and to take all steps necessary and incidental to the introduction of the revised scheme.

Proposed changes to scheme from 1st April 2017

- 9) Authorise the changes set out in 2.9.1 – 2.9.4 of the report [9.1 - 9.6 below] are made to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Persons who are not Pensioners) (Brighton & Hove City Council) 2013 to take effect from 1 April 2017. (These changes are set out in more detail in 4.3).

9.1) Change the taper rate from 20p to 25p.

9.2) To limit maximum CTR to the equivalent available for Band D property.

- 9.3) Change the minimum CTR payable to £5.00 per week.
- 9.4) For people with an entitlement to CTR on 31st March 2017 who will be affected by the provision in 2.9.2 [9.2 above] transitional protection will be applied so that no one will be worse off by £10 or more per week as a result of this provision. This transitional protection will end either: after a year; when a person moves, or when their claim ends, whichever is soonest.
- 9.5) As per the four year budget plan previously agreed at February 2016 Budget Council and presented in the three year saving plan on this agenda the permanent budget funding used to support the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Scheme to be set at a £0.055m for 2017/18. A further £0.095m will be set aside from the Welfare Reform reserve to provide £0.150m discretionary funds overall.
- 9.6) Amend the Discretionary Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Brighton & Hove City Council) 2016 so that people who would otherwise qualify for council tax reduction were it not for the provision in 2.9.3 [9.3 above] (£5.00 minimum CTR) can apply for Discretionary Council Tax Reduction.

