

**ITEMS RECOMMENDED FROM COMMITTEES**

Committee: Finance and Governance Committee

Date: 20 December 2012

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[M189]

Member Body	Report No.
<p><b><u>Scrutiny Committee 27 November 2012 – Localisation of Council Tax Support</u></b></p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee considered a report, on the requirement to devise a local council tax support scheme to replace the existing national council tax benefits scheme, to commence on 1 April 2013.</p> <p>The Head of Finance tabled the Risk Assessment appendix and advised the Committee that any localised scheme had to be approved by Council. Under the new scheme, pensioners must be protected, even though the Government had recommended a 10% cut in support to councils. In October, the Government announced its grant for next year, providing that the scheme met its criteria. Unfortunately, this grant would leave a shortfall of £600,000. The Council's scheme aimed to close this gap by concentrating on raising some additional revenue, as detailed in paragraph 6.1 to the report. The Government also allowed a premium charge to be made on long-term empty homes. By amending the scheme, to reduce to an 8.5% contribution from working age claimants, the Council would be eligible for Government grants next year. This would enable the scheme to be cost neutral. However, the figures may change once the actual Government funding package was known.</p> <p>Councillor Robert Stevens queried what would happen to a property if someone died. Sharon Jones replied that would depend if the property were subject to probate.</p> <p>Councillor Tom Hunt asked whether there was a clear view from the consultation of anything unpopular. The Head of Finance stated that the responses had been quite even with no particular outstanding issues.</p>	<p><b>M173 (attached as Appendix A)</b></p>

<p>It was resolved to <b>RECOMMEND TO FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:</b></p> <p><b>That the draft localised Council Tax Support Scheme be recommended to full Council.</b></p>	
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