

CORPORATE SERVICES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OSC

REPORT TO THE CABINET

19 DECEMBER 2018

Approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2019-20

Nick Oliver, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Cabinet Secretary presented the report to the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC on 17 December 2018.

He then responded to comments from members as follows:

- consultation - the advice from the Communications Team was that consulting 1000 council tax payer by direct mail would provide a statistically meaningful response, the level of which had been good. Letters had been sent to addresses across the whole of the county and those selected were proportionate to those paying the full council tax and those benefiting from the support scheme;
- although he could not be certain of the proposed savings, he was confident that they could be achieved based on the experience of other authorities and the accuracy regarding the number of claimants affected by the proposals. He acknowledged that his ultimate aim was to create the conditions for better employment opportunities in the county and for claimants to be better prepared and trained to access those jobs, thereby reducing the need for the scheme, and
- there was concern regarding the introduction of the changes coinciding with the rollout of Universal Credit in the county. There was a suggestion that those in receipt of Universal Credit should be protected in the first year of the proposed increase, and that the changes should be deferred until the full impact of the move to Universal Credit was known. However, Councillor Oliver advised members that although the Administration was keen to protect the Council Tax Support Scheme, savings had to be identified without seeking to reduce services elsewhere. The rollout of Universal Credit only affected new claimants, which was a relatively small number of those benefiting from the scheme.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the comments, as set out above, be presented to the Cabinet when it considers the report on 19 December 2018.

COUNCILLOR DAVID BAWN

CHAIRMAN