

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on 03 March 2021 by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance.

Date notified to all Members: Monday 08 March 2021

The end of the call-in period is 4:00 pm on Friday 12 March 2021

Unless called-in, the decision can be implemented from Saturday 13 March 2021

1. **TITLE**

Review of Sheffield's Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22

2. **DECISION TAKEN**

That the Cabinet Member:-

(a) notes the review of the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme, detailed in the report;

(b) agrees that, in line with the review, the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme is not revised, apart from the changes the Council is required to make by statute or replaced with another scheme;

(c) approves the amendments to the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme to accommodate the changes the Council is required to make by statute; and

(d) agrees that the Council's Council Tax Hardship Scheme continues to operate as detailed in the report.

3. **Reasons For Decision**

Legislation requires each Billing Authority to annually consider whether to revise or replace its Council Tax Reduction Scheme. For that purpose we have carried out a review of the Council's scheme.

Following from this review, it is recommended that the CTS scheme remains unchanged, as whilst reducing the support offered through the scheme may help with the Council's financial situation, this is countered by the fact that the burden will fall on vulnerable households who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. It is also considered that maintaining the scheme in its current form and at the same level of support provides certainty, during what are uncertain times.

In reaching this decision, consideration has been given to both increasing and decreasing the level of support provided under the CTS scheme, and to moving away from a scheme based on the previous CTB scheme. Further detail on these considerations is provided in the main body of the report.

Given the current financial position of the Council, which has been subject to significant cuts since 2010, the Council is not able to introduce a more generous scheme in 2021/22.

By maintaining the CTHS, the Council will be able to continue to offer targeted support to those in the most severe financial need including those who are least able to change their financial situation, in order to mitigate the ongoing impact of the change from a fully funded national benefit scheme to the CTS scheme.

4. Alternatives Considered And Rejected

There were 4 alternative options for changing the CTS scheme considered, which were (a) introduction of an Income Banded Scheme, (b) introducing a de-minimus income change, (c) introducing a UC specific scheme and (d) having a scheme which sets fixed assessment periods.

Further details of these options, including their advantages and disadvantages, are set out in the report.

Whilst consideration of the feasibility of introducing any one of the options outlined above was given, it is considered that there is significant merit in providing certainty during these uncertain times, and as such it was decided not to replace the current CTS scheme with one of the alternative options for 2021/22.

5. Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

6. Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Executive Director, Resources

7. Relevant Scrutiny Committee If Decision Called In

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee