

**FORM 1**

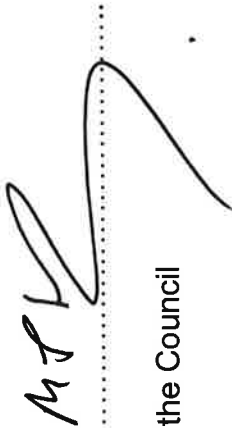
**NOTICE OF DELEGATION OF DECISION TO CABINET MEMBER BY STRONG LEADER**

Under Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

I, Councillor Marcus Hart, as Strong Leader, delegate the decision in respect of Welfare Support Fund: Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme to the Cabinet Member detailed below:

Councillor Nathan Desmond, Cabinet Member for Resources

Dated: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Signed:  .....  
Leader of the Council

**FORM 2**


**NOTICE OF DECISION OF CABINET MEMBER**

Pursuant to Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by section 63 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

In accordance with the authority delegated to me by the Leader, I have made the following decision:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Reason for decision</b>	<b>Date for Decision to be taken</b>
Welfare Support Fund: Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme	To <b>AGREE</b> that no changes should be proposed to the council tax reduction scheme for 2018-19.	There is no strong case to revise or replace the scheme at this stage. The present scheme has had an impact on collection rates and administration. They are either modest or absorbable. Insufficient evidence is available of the impact of higher contribution rates required by neighbouring councils, and these will need to be considered in reviewing the scheme for 2019-20..	September 2017

**I confirm that the appropriate statutory officer consultation has taken place with regard to this decision.**

Dated: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
Signed:   
Councillor: ...Nathan Desmond...  
Cabinet Member for Resources

**To:** Councillor Nathan Desmond, Cabinet Member for Resources

**From:** Tracey Southall, Corporate Director: Resources

**Ext.** 2100      [tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017

## **ANNUAL REVIEW OF COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To discharge the requirement to consider, for each financial year, whether to revise the scheme or to replace it with another scheme.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member **AGREES** that no changes should be proposed to the council tax reduction scheme for 2018-19.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The council tax reduction scheme provides reductions in council tax for those on low incomes. The reductions are up to 100% for those of pensionable age (80% for those of working age). Paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (inserted by Schedule 4 to the Local Government Finance Act 2012) places a duty on the Council to consider every year whether to revise a scheme or replace a scheme. This report discharges the requirement in respect of 2018-19. Any change to the scheme would have to be approved by full Council and this would have to happen no later than its meeting in December 2017, to meet the statutory deadline of 31 January.
- 3.2 The legislation does not allow the Council any discretion in respect of the reductions to be given to those of pensionable age. The Council's decision to require all working age people to pay 8.5% of their council tax in 2013-14 rising to 10% in 2014-15 and 20% in 2016-17 has been implemented smoothly although we continue to monitor closely the collection rate from this group of taxpayers. While there are no significant concerns about collection rates at present, there has been a substantial increase in administration in issuing reminders and taking other steps to pursue payments from this group of approximately 5,000 taxpayers, the majority of whom would not have been making a contribution at all before 2013.

### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 It is suggested that there is no strong case for revising Wyre Forest's council tax reduction scheme for 2018-19. While there has been an increase in the number of actions that council staff have to take to pursue payment, generally the picture on collection is positive.

- 4.2 Changing the scheme could have financial and other implications for the Council. Increasing the contribution rate would have financial benefits for Wyre Forest District Council and in particular for the county council assuming full recovery but the benefit for WFDC would be minimal. The lower the discount, the greater the likelihood that recipients would have difficulty in meeting their council tax liability and therefore costs of recovery could grow and the projected additional income might not materialise. If the discount was increased from its present level of 80%, there would be a cost to the Council in terms of reduced revenue to fund the services that communities in Wyre Forest value – given the financial circumstances, this option would not be appropriate to consider at present.
- 4.3 A decision at this stage to leave the discount scheme unchanged for 2018-19 also avoids the need to undertake consultation on proposals and preparation of an equality impact assessment of changes.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The recommendation has no additional financial implications for the Council.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions have been mentioned above. This is a Cabinet function. If the review led to a proposal to alter or replace the current scheme, there is a legal requirement to consult and the making or revising of a scheme would fall to full Council to discharge.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 The introduction of the current discount scheme was the subject of an equality impact needs assessment. No further assessment is required if the scheme is left unchanged for 2018-19.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 The main risks relate to compliance with the legislation. This report discharges the duty to consider whether to revise the scheme or replace it.

## **9. CONSULTEES**

- 9.1 Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 This report recommends that no changes should be proposed to the council tax reduction scheme for 2018-19.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 None.