

Time began 13:30 pm
Time ended 13:45 pm

Urgent Leader of the Council Cabinet Member Meeting

15 October 2015

Present: Councillor Banwait
In attendance: Councillor Jackson

06/15 Apologies

There were no apologies.

07/15 Late Items

There were no late items.

08/15 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

09/15 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10/15 Changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme

A report of the Director for Finance was summarised for the Leader by the Head of Benefits and Exchequer Services. It was reported that the authority is seeking a decision from the Leader of the Council to finalise and approve the arrangements for the consultation and consultation documentation.

The Leader was informed that following the abolishment of the government's Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme in April 2013, the funding available for the council to administer council tax support locally had reduced by 12%, amounting to around £22 million. It was reported that CTS has remained largely the same in Derby since April 2013, however, changes now need to be implemented in anticipation of the changes to welfare reform being introduced and to ensure that the scheme remains affordable for the Council. The Leader of the Council was informed that changes proposed would ensure equitable treatment within the CTS Scheme for people receiving Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Universal Credit (UC), however residents of pensionable age would remain unaffected by the changes.

Councillor Jackson asked what options we have and what flexibility the Council has with regards to the changes being made and the timescales for implementation. It was reported that the Council has control over the changes proposed for working age residents, however there needs to be a fair and consistent approach that is affordable to administer. It was further reported that all changes need to be agreed by Council on 30 January 2016 for implementation in April 2016.

The Leader of the Council was informed that the consultation is a two stage process and that stage one involved consultation with the major precept authorities, namely Derbyshire Constabulary and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service, and has already been completed. It was reported that if the recommendations were agreed, stage 2 of the consultation would start the following day and would consist of a 12 week public consultation. It was reported that will be consultation period would be broadly online but paper facilities would be made available for those who require this option. Around 13,000 affected households would receive a letter inviting them to engage in the consultation and further communication carried out through press releases, social media communication and through the council's web site. An Equality Impact Assessment would also be carried out during this period.

Resolved to:

- 1) Approve the consultation arrangements and the specified areas to be consulted on as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report;**
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance to finalise and approve the arrangements and to manage the consultation including the detail of the consultation documentation;**
- 3) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance to consult on the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme; and**
- 4) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance for consultation responses to be collated, analysed and for final proposals to be put forward for adoption by Council.**

MINUTES END