

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 20 December 2012  
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## Decisions of the Cabinet

17 December 2012

Cabinet:

\*Councillor Richard Cornelius (Chairman)

\*Councillor Daniel Thomas (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Dean Cohen

\*Councillor Tom Davey

\*Councillor Andrew Harper

\*Councillor Helena Hart

\*Councillor David Longstaff

\*Councillor David Longstaff

\*Councillor Sachin Rajput

\*Councillor Robert Rams

\*Councillor Joanna Tambourides

\*denotes Member present

### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the special meeting held on 6 December 2012 be approved as a correct record.

### 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dean Cohen.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Members declared the following interests:

Councillor	Agenda Item(s)	Interest
Helena Hart	5 – Council Tax Support Scheme	Personal but non prejudicial interest as Councillor Hart is co-owner of more than one property in the borough, which will be affected by exemptions as they now stand for landlords. Councillor Hart remained in the room and took part in the discussion and decision making.

### 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Details are appended of the questions asked of, and the answers given by the Chairman. Verbal responses were given to supplementary questions at the meeting.

## **5. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

Cabinet noted and agreed editorial changes as detailed in the published addendum to the report. Cabinet also agreed an amendment to recommendation 1.4 as set out in the addendum and reflected in (4) below.

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet

### **RESOLVED**

1. To note the results of the public consultation exercise undertaken from 1 August to 24 October 2012 on the principles and possible features of the new scheme.
2. To note the range of possible options to address the shortfall in revenue from government and reflect the outcomes of consultation, together with the associated impacts on population segments and risks of each option.
3. To endorse the adoption of the following features of the scheme for 2013/14, thereby enabling government transitional funding of £0.6m to be secured
  - Contribution of 8.5% of Council Tax liability from all working age claimants;
  - Simplified system of non-dependent allowances;
  - Protection from the impact of the scheme for war pensioners
4. To agree that technical changes to existing council tax discounts and exemptions in relation to Class A and C exemptions and discounts should be presented to Full Council at its meeting on 22 January 2013, to take effect from 1 April 2013.
5. To endorse the proposal that any surplus generated by the above measures should be allocated to the Crisis Fund being set up to support those in exceptional hardship in the borough.
6. To endorse the proposed implementation programme, including communications to the public.
7. To agree that the chosen scheme option should be presented to Full Council at its meeting on 22 January 2013 for final approval as the scheme to be adopted by Barnet, in line with the Government's requirement for every local authority to adopt a new scheme by 31 January 2013.

## **6. CRISIS FUND**

Cabinet noted and agreed an insertion into Section 7 (Legal Issues) of the report as set out in the published addendum to the report, to reflect the proposal to use any surplus from the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme to provide support via the Crisis Fund for those in hardship as a result of the CTS scheme.

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet

### **RESOLVED**

1. Considered the range of possible options for the design of a local discretionary 'Crisis Fund', to replace Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans which are being devolved to local authorities.
2. To approve the proposed scheme design.

3. To delegate authority for agreeing the detailed eligibility criteria for the scheme and market testing for cost-effective approaches for fulfilment of grants awarded under the scheme to the Assistant Director, Customer Services in consultation with Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance.
4. To agree to include Discretionary Housing Payments within the scope of the Crisis Fund application and assessment framework.
5. To agree the proposed implementation programme, including communications to the public; and
6. To agree to a formal review of the scheme being undertaken after it has been in operation for at least 6 months and to use this review to inform the scheme for 2014/15.

**7. ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were no such items.

The meeting finished at 7.30 pm