

MINUTES OF THE Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Wednesday, 10th December, 2025, 9.45 - 10.00 am

PRESENT:

Councillors: Seema Chandwani

ALSO ATTENDING:

Chris Liasi – Principal Committee Coordinator, Greg Osborne - Head of Revenues, Benefits & Income, Kari Manovitch - AD for Customer Services.

17. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred to the notice of filming at meetings and this information was noted.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was no urgent business.

20. URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

21. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / QUESTIONS

22. COUNCIL TAX HARDSHIP POLICY

The report had recommended approval of a new Council Tax Hardship Fund Policy to provide support for residents experiencing financial difficulties.

The cost-of-living crisis had placed many households under strain and affected Council Tax collection. The proposed policy had set out criteria and mechanisms for distributing funds to those in arrears or hardship, aiming to ease their burden.

Funding of £66,000 for the scheme had been agreed by the Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality on 8 October 2025, subject to the establishment of a policy and application process. This report had therefore sought formal approval of that policy.

The Cabinet Member queried whether this policy was for 1 year only or permanent. It was stated that it would this is a policy that can continue. The funding will be dependent.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member for Resident Services & Tackling Inequality:

2.1 Approved the Council Tax Hardship Fund Policy set out in Appendix 1.

2.2 Delegated authority to the Corporate Director for Environment and Resident Experience, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality, to make amendments to this policy following annual review or changes in legislation.

Reasons for decision

Funding for a Council Tax Hardship Fund for 2025-26 was agreed in October 2025, and the fund cannot be administered without a policy.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option is to do nothing. The funding would not be spent on this purpose and a new decision would be required to reallocate the funding set aside in 2025-26. Financially vulnerable residents in council tax arrears would not receive proactive support to pay their bill

CABINET MEMBER:

Signed by Cabinet Member

Date