

## STOCKPORT COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET– SUMMARY SHEET

**Subject:** Council Tax and Business Rates Discounts Annual Review

**Report to Cabinet**

**Date:** 18 December 2018

**Report of:** Cabinet Leader and Cabinet Member for Policy, Finance & Devolution

**Key Decision:** Y

Forward Plan ☒ General Exception ☐ Special Urgency ☐ (Mark with a Y if applicable)

#### **Summary:**

The Council is required to annually agree the scheme of local discounts and exemptions which are available against liability for Business Rates and Council Tax. This includes the localised Council Tax Support Scheme.

This report summarises the impact of Business Rates and Council Tax discounts and exemptions and recommends that the schemes be maintained for 2018/19 with some recommended amendments:

- The continuation of existing discretionary relief schemes for Business Rates
- Changes/removal of Council Tax discounts in relation to empty and unfurnished properties
- An increase in Council Tax premium charges for properties that have been empty for two or more years
- Changes in dealing with Council Tax Support claims from Universal Credit recipients

#### **Comments/Views of the Cabinet Member:**

The Council Tax Discount and Council Tax Support Schemes have continued to operate very well in Stockport and have had a positive effect on the Council's finances but in light of financial pressures faced by the Council it is appropriate to review local schemes to ensure appropriate use of Council finance. Making changes to the Council Tax discounts for empty property will enable budget to be made available to support the most vulnerable people in the borough. The changes made to the Council Tax Support scheme will help to remove barriers as people move on to Universal Credit.

#### **Recommendation(s) of Cabinet Member:**

That the recommendations outlined in the report are agreed

#### **Relevant Scrutiny Committee** (if decision called in):

Corporate, Resource Management & Governance

#### **Background Papers** (if report for publication):

Contact person for accessing  
Background papers and discussing the report

**Officer:** Alison Blount  
**Tel:** 0161 474 5107

**'Urgent Business':**

**No**

**Certification** (if applicable)

This report should be considered as 'urgent business' and the decision exempted from 'call-in' for the following reason(s):

The written consent of Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ and the Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer/ Borough Treasurer for the decision to be treated as 'urgent business' was obtained on /will be obtained before the decision is implemented.

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