

## WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DECISION BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### SECTION A

**DATE OF DECISION:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
**PORTFOLIO AREA:** Finance & Resources Portfolio  
**SUBJECT TITLE:** Administration of the 'Support for Energy Bills – the Council Tax rebate 2022-23' mandatory and discretionary schemes

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

### SECTION B – IDENTITY OF THE “DECISION-MAKER”

**Name of Officer:** Andrew Ferrier  
**Title:** Chief Executive

Pursuant to Delegated Powers as set out in paragraph (2) of “Delegations to Chief Executive” in Part 3 of the Constitution, namely

“To do anything, in consultation with the Leader, which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of the Council’s functions subject to:

- (i) the matter being regarded as an emergency or urgent situation; and
- (ii) a report back to the Council, Cabinet or Committee concerned. “

### SECTION C – SUMMARY

#### Background

Government has recently introduced a package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate to help households with rising energy bills. The strands of this which the Council is involved in administering are:

- A £150 non-repayable rebate for households in England in council tax bands A to D, known as the Council Tax Rebate.
- £144 million of discretionary funding for billing authorities to support households who are in need but are not eligible for the Council Tax Rebate, known as the Discretionary Fund.

Summaries of the main and discretionary schemes are as follows:

#### 1. Council Tax Rebate

A one-off, non-refundable payment of £150 for households in Council tax bands A-D. This also includes properties assigned an alternate valuation band of band D as a result of the disabled band reduction scheme.

The payment will be made where, on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, the property is someone’s sole or main residence and is a chargeable dwelling for Council Tax purposes.

#### 2. Discretionary Fund

This Council’s share of the £144M national allocation is £178,050. This can be used to award payments to properties in Council Tax bands E-H or to provide additional assistance to properties in bands A-D.

Government has not prescribed how this funding should be distributed. Instead, it recognises that billing authorities may wish to provide support to other energy bill payers who are not eligible under the core

scheme. Councils are required to locally determine how they wish to offer this support.

#### **SECTION D – THE DECISION**

“That authority is given to the Head of Finance & Revenues:-

1. To implement and administer grants under Council Tax Rebate Scheme in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC).
2. In consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder, to determine the eligibility criteria and payment regime for the Discretionary Fund and thereafter to implement and administer payments under those Schemes.

#### **SECTION E – REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

*The decision-maker's reasons for making the decision recorded in Section D:*

Administration of these grant funds does not fall within the scope of existing delegated authority. Government and taxpayers will expect payments to be made as soon as practically possible. Therefore appropriate authority is required to meet these expectations and determine applications and pay the grants to eligible ratepayers.

There is no convenient meeting of the Council or Cabinet to which this decision could be brought. Waiting to bring the decision to Committee would cause unacceptable delay in implementing the schemes and delay the measures designed to reduce hardship caused by high utility price inflation.

**SECTION F – DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

The options are:

1. to give delegated authority to the Head of Finance & Revenues (in consultation with specified members where appropriate); or
2. to refer applications (or the issue of giving delegated authority) to Committee.

Option 2 would result in delays and economic harm to eligible ratepayers, would defeat the object of the urgent Government funding as well as damage to the Council's reputation and is rejected.

**SECTION G – OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION**

None

**SECTION H – BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were taken into consideration when making the decision:

1. DLUHC Support for energy bills – the council tax rebate 2022-23: billing authority guidance - Support for energy bills - the council tax rebate 2022-23: billing authority guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**SECTION I – Any Conflict of Interest Declared and Dispensation Granted**

None.

We certify that the decision this document records was made Pursuant to Delegated Powers as set out in paragraph (2) of "Delegations to Chief Executive" in Part 3 of the Constitution and is a true and accurate record or minute of that decision.

Chief Executive:



Dated:

29/03/2022

The Leader of the Council



Dated:

28/03/2022