

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 23rd January, 2013

Present:- The Mayor David Becket – in the Chair

Councillors Allport, Mrs Beech, Bailey, Miss Baker, Boden, Mrs Burgess, Mrs Burnett, Cairns, Clarke, Mrs Cornes, Miss Cooper, Cooper, Eagles, Fear, Hailstones, Mrs Hailstones, Mrs Hambleton, Hambleton, Mrs Heesom, Holland, Howells, Mrs Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Loades, Matthews, Miss Olszewski, Olszewski, Studd, Welsh, Wemyss, Wilkes, Williams, Taylor.J, Waring, Miss Reddish, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Snell, Sweeney, Tagg, Mrs Bates, Miss Mancey, Eastwood, Miss Walklate, Mrs Peers, Plant, Stringer, Stubbs, Taylor.M, Turner and Mrs Winfield

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bannister, Mrs Heames, Lawton, Mrs Peers, White, Mrs Williams and Williams.

3. **EX-MAYORS-MRS BETTY COX AND MR VIC FINNEMORE**

The Mayor led a minutes silence as a mark of respect to the memories of Mrs Betty Cox and Mr Vic Finnemore, former Councillors and Mayors of the Borough, who had recently passed away.

4. **LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to adopt a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the Borough for the 2013/14 financial year.

The Leader introduced the item explaining the process followed prior to presenting the scheme for Newcastle as set out in the report indicating that the Council was required to approve the scheme for 2013/14 by 31 January failing which a default and more draconian scheme prescribed by regulations and which did not consider the impact on our residents, being imposed by the Government.

The scheme placed before Council for approval had been the subject of an extensive consultation process with major precepting bodies and other interested organisations/individuals and aimed to better assist the most vulnerable residents of the Borough including the unemployed, part-time workers and those who were unable to increase their working hours.

The financial and resource implications were set out in the report where it was indicated that Localised Council Tax Support would be treated as a discount on the Council Tax bill, much like Single Persons Discounts resulting in a smaller Council Tax base.

Central Government were to provide funding under its new burdens scheme for Localised Council Support in connection with which initial payments had been made to local authorities with further payments to follow at least over the next two financial years.

In answer to a question from a Member it was indicated that the scheme before Council did not qualify for a one-off grant offered by the Government because it had been offered too late in the consultation process. Accordingly, there had been no time for the scheme to be altered and the consultation process begun again in time for it to qualify.

In his summing up the Leader of the Council re-emphasised the fact that failure to adopt the Localised Tax Support Scheme as presented would result in the default scheme being imposed and result in financial loss to the Council and all its precepting bodies.

Resolved: That the Local Tax Support Scheme for the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council area be adopted for the 2013/14 financial year.

THE MAYOR DAVID BECKET
Chair