

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Date Written	10 th December 2020
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Service Area	Place and Transformation
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 th January 2021

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Adoption Of Council Tax Reduction Scheme For The Financial Year 2021/22

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Council adopted a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) as per the requirements laid by Welsh Government in respect of the financial year 2020/21.
- 1.2 The Council is required to adopt a scheme on an annual basis by 31st January of the preceding financial year. Notwithstanding the fact that a default scheme would come into effect even if the Council failed to adopt a scheme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that

- 2.1 The adoption of a Council Tax Reduction Scheme to commence in April 2021 under the requirements of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations for the 2021/22 financial year be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme in Wales is set by Regulations made under Schedule 1B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). On 27 November 2013, the Welsh Assembly approved two sets of regulations:
 - the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Schemes) (Wales) Regulations 2013 (“the Default Scheme Regulations”) and;

- the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 (“the Prescribed Requirements Regulations”).

These Regulations prescribe the main features of the Scheme to be adopted by all councils in Wales.

3.2 Within the Prescribed Requirements Regulations, there is limited discretion given to the Council to apply additional discretionary elements that are more generous than the national scheme and which provide for additional administrative flexibility.

These are:

- The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons after they return to work where they have previously been receiving a Council Tax reduction that is to end as a result of their return to work;
- Discretion to increase the amount of War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions which is to be disregarded when calculating income of the claimant;
- The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax Reduction with regard to late claims prior to the new standard period of three months before the claim.

3.3 If the Council decided to offer more generous local discretions this would further increase the cost of the scheme. The Council proposes to leave the discretions which it adopted in previous years unchanged.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

4.1 The CTRS funding is included in the Revenue Settlement and does not cover the full costs of the scheme and it is possible that any future changes to regulations could further increase the costs of the scheme.

5.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention 	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 			
3. Protected Characteristics (<i>including Welsh Language</i>)	10 of 10	0 of 10	0 of 10
4. Biodiversity	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>The main positive impacts are the provision of financial assistance to low income families and individuals to pay their Council Tax demands.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts</p>			

ELLIS COOPER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCILLOR ANDREW BARRY
CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE
AND CORPORATE SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.