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EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

A1 Service Area	Revenues, Benefits & Customer Contacts
A2 Title	Council Tax County-wide Council Tax Discount Review contract
A3 Decision Taken By	Deputy Leader/ Chief Officer
A4 Chief Officer	Please print name: Sal Khan Please sign name: 
A5 Leader / Deputy Leader	Please print name: Cllr P Ackroyd Please sign: 
A6 Date of Decision	24/1/19

Confidentiality

A7 Is this Decision confidential by containing exempt information as described in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972?	No
A7.1 If yes, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972.	Paragraph []

Scrutiny

A8 Which Scrutiny Committee should this decision be submitted to?	(Please tick as appropriate) ✓
Scrutiny (Audit & Value for Money Council Services) Committee	✓
Scrutiny (Economic Growth, Communities and Health) Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>

B1 What is the Decision?	To approve the 'call-off' of Managed Services for Staffordshire County Council's County-wide Council Tax Discount Review contract
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B2 What are the reasons for the Decision?

In 2012, Staffordshire County Council entered into a contract with Northgate Public Services, who were required to review all single person discounts on Council Tax accounts for all Staffordshire District Councils. The contract was to conduct two reviews for each district over a period of four years and the County Council funded the whole contract. Of the two reviews conducted for East Staffordshire Borough Council, an average percentage of 4.5% of the reviewed discounts were cancelled generating an additional £153k revenue in 2012 and £206K in 2014. The Council, therefore, benefitted from 10% of that revenue (£15k and £21k respectively).

Due to the success of this contract, the district councils have again asked Staffordshire County Council to award another tender for two sets of discount reviews per participating authority, this time including reviews on all Council Tax discounts (including single person discount, student discounts, etc), empty properties, and occupancy checks for Local Council Tax Reduction cases over a period of four years. For East Staffordshire this is estimated to be around 25,000 cases with an estimated £266k additional revenue to be generated over the period of the contract (4.5% of the total discounts currently applied £5,909,507 – not including Council Tax Reduction). The Council's estimated share being £27k (rounded) per annum.


This latest contract has been split into two lots: Lot 1 is where the successful contractor will provide a data matching service, which the relevant authority would use to conduct its own reviews. Lot 2 is where the successful contractor will provide a Managed Service, identifying accounts where there seems to be an inconsistency in occupancy, conducting a review of all discrepancies, updating relevant authority systems via secure remote access and dealing with appeals against discount cancellations following the reviews conducted.

Due to the success of the last contract and the very low impact on resources required, it is recommended that the Council request a Managed Service from this new 4-year discount review contract when it is intended to be in place early in the new year.

B3 What are the contributions to Corporate Priorities?	Council Tax is a primary source of revenue to the Council and therefore underpins all priorities.
B4 What are the Human Rights considerations?	There are no Human Rights issues arising from this decision.

Financial Implications

B5 What are the financial implications?	<p>The main financial issues arising from this decision are as follows:</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council will fund the contract, meaning there are no expenditure/cost implications for East Staffordshire Borough Council.</p> <p>It is estimated that the full year effect of discounts cancelled arising from the reviews will be £266k per annum once all the reviews are complete. East Staffordshire Borough Council's share of this is estimated to be £27k (rounded) per annum. The outcome of the reviews will be reflected in future tax base calculations and therefore the MTFS.</p>
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The finance section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit:	<p>Please print name: Lisa Turner, Chief Accountant</p> <p>Please sig </p>
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Policy Framework

B6 Is the Decision wholly in accordance with the Council's policy framework?	Yes
B6.1 If No, does it fall within the urgency provisions (Part 3 of the Constitution)?	NA
B6.2 Has it got the appropriate approvals under those provisions?	NA
B7 Is the Decision wholly in accordance with the Council's budget?	Yes
B7.1 If No, does it fall within the urgency provisions (Part 3 of the Constitution)?	NA

B7.2 Has it got the appropriate approvals under those provisions?	NA
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Equalities Implications

B8 What are the Equalities implications: N/A
B8.1 Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): N/A
B8.2 Negative (Threats): N/A
B8.3 The subject of this decision is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality impact assessment is not required.
B8.4 [The equality impact assessment identified the following actions to be carried out:] N/A

Risk Assessment

B9 What are the Risk Assessment implications:
B9.1 Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): Conducting discount reviews ensures that the Council's Tax Base is maintained and collection maximised to ensure local services can be provided. There are no financial implications for the Council, other than collection of additional revenue generated, as the County Council is funding the tender.
B9.2 Negative (Threats): The Council risks continuing to award discounts to Council Tax payers who are not entitled to those discounts, therefore reducing the revenue it should be collecting in order to fund local services.
B9.3 The risks are already incorporated into the register or do not specifically need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

Legal Considerations

B10 What are the Legal Considerations:

B10.1 The main legal issues arising from this decision are as follows:
Local Government Finance Act 1992, Council Tax (Discount Disregards) Order 1992 (as amended), Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992, Council Tax (Additional Provisions for Discount Disregards) Regulations 1992 (as amended), Local Government Finance Act 2012, Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:

Please print name: Angela Wakefield,
Solicitor to the Council, Monitoring
Officer.

Please sign name:



Sustainability Implications

B11 What are the Sustainability implications: N/A
B11.1 The proposal [would/would not] result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures). The positive/negative impacts are set out below (please refer to guidance notes).
B11.2 Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): N/A
B11.3 Negative (Threats): N/A

Health & Safety Implications

B12 What are the Health & Safety implications:
B12.1 A Risk Assessment has not been carried out and entered into Harriet for all significant hazards and risks because there are no significant hazards or risks arising from this decision.
B12.2 Any financial implications to mitigate against these hazards and risks are considered above.
B12.3 [Control measures and an action plan have been identified for any significant hazards and risks identified in the risk assessment. The positive/negative impacts are set out below] N/A
B12.3.1 Positive (Benefits) N/A
B12.3.2 Negative (Threats) N/A

Key Decision

B13 Is this a Key Decision?	No
Note: A Key Executive Decision is one where:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. REVENUE – Any contract or proposal with an annual payment or saving of more than £100,000 2. CAPITAL – Any capital project with a value in excess of £150,000 3. A decision which significantly affects communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards. 	
B13.1 If this is a Key Decision, is this an urgent decision such that a delay caused by use of the Call-in Procedure would <u>seriously</u> prejudice the public interest?	NA
B13.2 If yes, has the Mayor or in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor or in his/her absence the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision will be exempt from Call-in?	NA

NOTE: If this decision is subject to the Call-in Procedure it will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of 3 working days after publication – unless 10 Members of the Council call in the decision.

Please send the original signed document to andrea.davies@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk