

Cabinet

Supplementary Information



Date: Tuesday, 5 December 2023

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber - City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR

6. Reports from scrutiny commission

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Date: Wednesday, 29 November 2023



Statement to Cabinet – 5 December 2023

Comments from the Finance Task Group/Resources Scrutiny members on Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2024/25 (agenda item 16)

Please note: This statement is being submitted in advance of the (awaited) publication of the 5 December Cabinet report on the review of the CTRS for 2024/25, noting that the second phase of public consultation concluded at midnight on 26 November. At our Resources Scrutiny Commission meeting on 8 December, members intend to review the 5 December Cabinet report (which is not currently available to us) and the related Cabinet decision with a view to submitting our further, final comments on this matter to the 12 December Full Council.

As Cabinet is aware, the Finance Task Group/Resources Scrutiny members submitted initial comments to Cabinet on 4 July prior to the consultation on the CTRS being launched <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s85087/Finance%20Task%20Group%20report%20-%20CTRS%20review%20-%20204%20July%20Cabinet%20report.pdf>

In terms of the consultation, we feel we must again register our disappointment that some of the suggestions we put forward in July about the content and design of the consultation were not reflected in the final version of the consultation documents.

The Medium Term Financial Plan assumes the delivery of the £3m saving from the CTRS review in 2024/25 as determined at last year's Budget Council meeting. It is critical for Cabinet to be aware however that whichever decision is taken, whether it be to implement the £3m planned saving or not, there will still be significant knock-on pressures that will arise in other areas of the budget.

Cabinet should also be aware that a majority of members of the Finance Task Group do not support the proposals to change the CTRS. If a revised scheme is ultimately put in place, we retain concerns around the deliverability of the envisaged saving and the likely negative impact on Council Tax collection rate and also additional costs which will be incurred elsewhere as a result of support being withdrawn from some of our least-well off citizens.

As indicated above, we will be submitting a fuller statement to Full Council on 12 December, after we have had an opportunity to review the detail of the 5 December Cabinet report.

Councillor Geoff Gollop

Chair, Resources Scrutiny Commission & Finance Task Group
(on behalf of members of the Commission/Task Group)
28 November 2023