

Committee: Full Council

Agenda Item

Date: 2 October 2012

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Title: Scheme of Delegation

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Item for decision

Summary

1. As part of the ongoing reform of local government finance, a new system of business rates localisation is being introduced from 2013/14. Details of the scheme were reported to the Cabinet on 13 September. As part of the new system, there is a requirement for the Council to produce an estimate of its business rates income, as part of the budget setting process, and submit this estimate to DCLG and major precepting authorities (County, Police and Fire). In practice this estimate will be captured on the existing "NNDR1" statistical return, ordinarily certified by the Section 151 Officer. The first provisional estimate is required to be produced by mid December 2012, and finalised by 30 January 2013. This will be updated annually thereafter.
2. Analogous to the existing arrangements for approving an estimate of Council Tax Base, arrangements for approving the business rates estimates need to be made. Under the Scheme of Delegation of Council Functions, authority is delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive – Finance to certify the annual calculation of the Council Tax Base. The delegated authority is necessary due to the technical nature of the Tax Base calculation obviating scope for political debate, and because the timescales for producing the Tax Base figure do not typically coincide with Council meetings. The Tax Base itself is reported to the Cabinet and Council in budget setting reports.
3. For similar reasons, it is proposed that an equivalent delegation be established in relation to certification of the Council's Business Rate Estimates; estimates will be reported to the Cabinet and Council in budget reports. The delegation will enable the Assistant Chief Executive – Finance to conclude the technical calculation process in time to meet DCLG and major preceptor deadlines.
4. The existing delegated authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Finance "to provide other certifications and authorisations required of the Section 151 Officer" could be interpreted as sufficient to include business rates estimates, however officers feel that in view of the reforms, it is best practice for this particular item to be separately identified in the Scheme of Delegation.

Recommendations

5. To add to the Scheme of Delegation of Council Functions – Assistant Chief Executive – Finance: "To certify the Council's Business Rate Estimates".

Financial Implications

6. No direct implications arising from the recommendation.

Background Papers

7. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
No risks identified			

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.