

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council 23 July 2020

B&NES Charitable Trust and Community Contribution Fund

Labour Group to move:

Council notes:

- 1 The introduction of Community Contribution Fund by Westminster City Council in 2018 which has given residents in the highest valued properties the opportunity to contribute more to their local community on a voluntary basis. The scheme is managed by a Charitable Trust which allows Gift Aid, and any money raised is spent on local discretionary projects in three specific areas: helping young people; extra support for people who find themselves sleeping on Westminster's streets; and tackling isolation and loneliness across all age groups. Since its introduction, the scheme has generated an additional £1M.
- 2 That a growing number of councils are preparing to follow Westminster City Council's example.
- 3 That there are currently 437 Band H properties in B&NES (after allowing for adjustments for discounts applied, this equates to an equivalent of 376 dwellings). The B&NES element of Council Tax for Band H properties (i.e. comprising Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept but excluding police, fire and parish precepts) is £2,913.76. If all Band H Council Tax payers paid 100% extra, the additional revenue would be about £1.096M.
- 4 Further notes that the Council Tax team has fielded enquiries from Council Tax payers in other Bands who may be willing to make a voluntary contribution.

Council believes:

- 5 That addressing the chronic underfunding of local government requires a fair and progressive funding settlement. In the absence of this, the Council, in its community leadership role, should enable residents who wish to pay more for additional projects reflecting local priorities to be able to do so.

Council therefore resolves:

- 6 To agree in principle to introduce a Community Contribution Fund from 2021/22, but to ask the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to consider and report back to Council with recommendations on how it might work in practice including:
 - (i) Whether to adopt an inclusive approach inviting all Council Tax payers to contribute or whether it should be limited to those in Band H;
 - (ii) The vehicle for managing any new Community Contribution Fund;
 - (iii) The mechanism for identifying local priorities for support; and
 - (iv) The means of consulting with residents on the introduction of any such Fund.

- *Motions approved at Council do **not** bind the Executive but may influence future decisions of the Cabinet.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*