

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

3 OCTOBER 2019 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr C Ladkin and Mr P Williams – Vice-Chairman

Mr JMT Collett, Mr DS Cope, Mrs MJ Crooks, Mr SM Gibbens, Ms A Pendlebury,
Mr MC Sheppard-Bools and Mr R Webber-Jones

Officers in attendance: Bill Cullen, Edwina Grant, Stephen Meynell, Rebecca Owen,
Madeline Shellard, Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

165 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

167 **COUNCIL TAX - LOCAL DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS**

Members received a report which recommended changes to council tax discounts and premiums as follows:

- An increased charge for long-term empty properties to 100%, and the maximum allowed under legislation where possible up to 300% for properties empty more than ten years
- A reduction in the major repairs discount from 50% to zero
- Removal of the one month empty property discount.

Members supported the ambition of encouraging bringing empty properties back into use and also noted the loss in New Homes Bonus as a result of a high number of empty properties. It was noted that there was still discretion for example following bereavement.

Councillor Ladkin arrived at 7.22pm.

Whilst in support of the first recommendation, members did not support the reduction of the major repairs discount or the removal of the one month empty property discount. They felt that if major work was being undertaken, this was beneficial in order to bring the property back into use and should not be discouraged and suggested it may discourage people from purchasing a property that required work.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The increased premium charge for long-term empty properties be supported and RECOMMENDED to Council;
- (ii) The Executive member for Finance be RECOMMENDED to reconsider recommendations 2 and 3 before bringing a report to Council.