



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

Darren Tilley – Executive Officer & Town Clerk

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Our Ref: DT/NB/020317

Your Ref:

When calling please ask for: Darren Tilley

2nd March 2017

Dear Councillor Terry Richardson,

Ending of Council Tax Support Grant and New Homes Bonus from 2018/2019

It is with extreme concern and dismay that I write to you following the decision of Blaby District Council to end the payment to parish and town councils of the parish share of Council Tax Support Grant and New Homes Bonus from April 2018.

Braunstone Town Council currently receives around £50,000 per year in such funding due to the changes to the tax base resulting from the Localisation of Council Tax Support, which is due to the percentage of claimants living in the parish, the highest percentage in Blaby District. At our Policy & Resources Committee last week, our Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that the removal of the grant from April 2018 would result in an approximate increase of 17% on band D of the Town Council's precept, based on the predicted budget spend in the Council's medium to long term financial strategy. Councillors on the Committee, unanimously resolved to challenge the removal of this funding, which the Town Council would have raised using the normal tax base prior to the localisation of Council Tax Support, due to the severe and detrimental impact upon the services provided by the Town Council and/or the level of increase which would be required on the parish precept in a part of the district with the highest levels of deprivation and proportion of benefit claimants.

The minutes of the District Council meeting where the decision was made record the reason as being "The Council wish to provide sufficient notice to Parish Councils regarding reductions in funding for 2018/19", this cannot be the real reason, the reason for the decision I assume is for you to balance your books. However, this money is paid by Central Government to offset Council Tax receipts lost due to the localisation of the benefit scheme, the Government have already put on record that "it would only be appropriate not to pass on any local council tax support grant if there were no claimants in that parish", I attach a copy of the letter for your reference.

Your decision disproportionately affects areas where there is a higher proportion of residents who rely on access to public and community services for their wellbeing; these services will be at risk while placing a greater burden of cost on the community, putting in jeopardy the hard work of both councils to reduce isolation, build stronger communities and prevent individuals and families reaching crisis point, and putting greater pressure on the public purse in the long term.



Therefore, I strongly urge you to consider your wider responsibilities to the District as a place and not just to the corporate finances of the Council and continue to pass on Council Tax Support Grant to Parish and Town Councils beyond 2018 and while the current scheme of local Council Tax Support remains in force.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Nick Brown
Leader of Braunstone Town Council

Cc: Chief Executive, Blaby District Council
Local broadcasters and newspapers
Executive Officer & Town Clerk, Braunstone Town Council