

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 6TH MARCH, 2024

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 14TH DECEMBER, 2023

“C184 COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS ON LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the policy to be adopted for Council Tax Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes for 2024-25.

A number of people responded to the consultation held in 2022 which informed last year's decision. Since that time, the number of identified second homes had risen from 402 to 508. The Leader said that there were grants available through the Council to anyone with a house to bring back into use for people in the Vale of Glamorgan who need those homes. There was currently a sizeable shortfall of available homes, and it was right to encourage bringing back empty properties for use by local people. It was recognised that there were exceptions, such as probate, which could affect the time it would take to bring a property back into use.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the policy with regard to not granting any level of discount for unoccupied dwellings that have remained so for 6 months agreed for 2023-24, be agreed for 2024-25.
- (2) T H A T the long term empty property premium of 100% agreed by Full Council on 6th March, 2023 for the 2023-24 financial year continue for such properties from 2024-25 that remain so for the period up to (but not including) 24 months.
- (3) T H A T from 1st April, 2024 a premium of 150% be introduced for long term empty properties that have remained as such for a continuous period of 24 months or more.
- (4) T H A T from 1st April, 2025 a premium of 200% be introduced for long term empty properties that have remained as such for a continuous period of 36 months or more.
- (5) T H A T the policy to introduce a premium of 100% on second homes for the 2024-25 financial year agreed on 6th March, 2023 be reaffirmed.

Reasons for decisions

(1) The Council was required to determine its policy on discounts in relation to unoccupied dwellings as defined in classes A, B and C to the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998 each year.

(2&4) The Council was required to determine its policy regarding premiums in respect of long-term empty properties as defined in Sections 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

(3) Upon reviewing the implementation of the premium for long term empty properties introduced from the start of 1st April 2023, it was felt that a straight increase to the premium levels as previously proposed, may counteract the intention of the policy, which was to bring long term empty properties back into use, if the level of charges due hindered necessary works required to make a dwelling habitable. As such it was felt that a stepped approach would be more in keeping with the policy to ensure that persistent long term empty properties were targeted.

(5) The Council was required to determine its policy regarding premiums in respect of second homes as defined in Sections 12A and 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

N.B. As amendments are a matter for Full Council approval the Council is requested to approve the Resolutions as above.