



SUMMONS TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING - SUPPLEMENTAL

Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 6.00 pm
Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

To the Mayor and Councillors of the London Borough of Brent and to each and every one of them.

I hereby summon you to attend the MEETING OF THE COUNCIL of this Borough.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Downs".

CAROLYN DOWNS
Chief Executive

Dated: 18 February 2020

For further information contact: James Kinsella, Governance Manager
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For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit:
democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Please note this meeting will be filmed for live broadcast on the Council's website. By entering the meeting room you will be deemed to have consented to the possibility of being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:
 - To which you are appointed by the council;
 - which exercises functions of a public nature;
 - which is directed is to charitable purposes;
 - whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party or trade union).
- (b) The interests a of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above

Agenda

6 Budget and Council Tax 2020/21 – Conservative Group amendments 1 - 4 to budget proposals

To consider the proposed amendments submitted by the Conservative Group in relation to the Council's budget proposals for 2020/21.



Please remember to switch your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

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Council Meeting 19 February 2020

Conservative Group Amendment to the Council's Budget Proposals 2020/21

Advice from the Director of Finance

Senior finance support has been provided to assist the Conservative Group to formulate an alternative budget that reflects their policy priorities.

The Alternative Budget proposed by the Conservative Group would be a legal, balanced budget for 2020/21, although it is recognised that this carries significant financial risk. The potential implications for 2021/22 and 2022/23 have not been considered as part of these proposals.

The proposal to remove the growth for London Living Wage (LLW) will mainly have an impact on the procurement of the new homecare contract agreed by Cabinet in November 2019. Therefore, this proposal would result in funding for LLW on the new homecare contract not being available and the Council would incur consequential abortive costs of the tender.

In addition, the council currently spends approximately £1.3m per annum on landlord incentives. The budget is used to procure properties to end the homeless duty, and so move people out of temporary accommodation which is typically more expensive. It is also used to procure properties to prevent homelessness and therefore stop people going into temporary accommodation in the first instance. Consequently, reducing this budget may result in higher temporary accommodation costs. This proposal therefore comes with significant financial risk and an alternative mitigating proposal would need to be identified.

The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. For Brent, this grant is not built into the Council's revenue budget and currently forms part of the financing of the capital programme. Allocating a proportion of the grant into the Council's revenue budget is allowed under the current grant conditions, however would have an impact on the financing of the capital programme such that projects would need to be scaled back or reconsidered.

In summary, these proposals carry significant financial risk and require further detailed modelling to ensure that they are deliverable and that their consequences are properly understood.

Motion in the name of Cllr Suresh Kansagra on behalf of the Conservative Group

Conservative Group – Alternative Budget Proposals 2020/21

Council is asked to consider the following alternative budget for 2020/21:

Propose to increase Council tax by 2.5% only, with 2% ring fenced for Adult Social Care.

This proposal will generate income of £126.3m, compared to £128.1m generated with the planned increase of 3.99%.

This proposal means a Brent Council Tax of £1,293.90 at Band D for 2020/21 compared to Labour proposal for £1,312.74

The Council notes the following:

- The Conservatives have always been and still are the party of lower rates of taxation through responsible policies and budgeting, meaning that people will have more money in their pockets to spend and save as they wish.
- The Conservative have always proposed to tax the residents less leaving more money in their pockets to spend and save as they wish.
- Labour have increased Council tax by over 15% since 2016.
- Council tax increased by 3.99% in 2016/17, 3.99% in 2017/18, 4.99% in 2018/19 and 4.99% in 2019/20. Prior to this council tax was frozen. Therefore, since 2016, council tax has increased by over 15% overall. Well above the rate of inflation

Propose to remove the growth for London Living Wage, saving £1.5m.

The Conservative Group believe in fair wages for fair work. Conservatives support a National Minimum Wage. Since the introduction of the London living Wage in 2008 the Conservatives have kept pace with increases.

Propose to remove the landlord incentive and save 1.3m.

The Council's Landlords Incentive Scheme is designed to give money to Landlords as an incentive to rent their properties to people who have been evicted from their homes and who cannot ordinarily afford to live in the borough. There are many people who work hard, pay their bills and taxes but have to live outside Brent because they cannot afford to live in the borough. We feel that it is wrong to subsidise private landlords in this way. It also acts as an incentive to keep rents artificially high. It is therefore our proposal to scrap this scheme.

Propose to abolish the green bin tax

Gardeners are fulfilling a great service to the borough. We acknowledge that they are supporting sustainable environmental good practice of which many will be doing their own composting. We are of the opinion that the green bin tax has a negative impact to the green policies that the householders and the Council purports to support.

Conservative Group Priority areas

The Conservative Group will continue to support those people who are young people, vulnerable and elderly; measures to improve highway infrastructure such as addressing poor pavements, potholes and fly-tipping.

The table below sets out the proposed changes to the 2020/21 budget.

Conservative Group - Alternative budget proposals	Impact on 2020/21 budget
Propose to increase Council tax by 2.5%, with 2% ring fenced for Adult Social Care	1.8
Propose to remove the growth for London Living Wage	(1.5)
Propose to remove landlord incentives	(1.3)
Recognition of additional pressures on temporary accommodation budget	1.3
Build New Homes Bonus into the base budget	(1.3)
Propose to abolish the green bin tax	1.0
Total	0.0

Councillor Suresh Kansagra
Kenton Ward Councillor

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