



General Purposes Committee

Thursday 8 December 2016 at 6.00pm

Boardrooms 3-4 - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley HA9 0FJ

Membership:

Members

Councillors:

Butt (Chair)
McLennan (Vice-Chair)
Colwill
Farah
Hirani
Mashari
W Mitchell Murray
Southwood

Substitute Members

Labour Councillors:

Bradley, Denselow, Kabir, Mahmood, Miller, Moher,
Pavey and Krupa Sheth

Conservative Councillors:

Davidson and Kansagra

For further information contact: Tom Welsh, Governance Officer
020 8937 6607, tom.welsh@brent.gov.uk

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

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item	Page
------	------

1	Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests	
----------	---	--

Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant personal and prejudicial interests and discloseable pecuniary interests in any matter to be considered at this meeting.

2	Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
----------	--	--------------

3	Matters arising	
----------	------------------------	--

4	Deputations (if any)	
----------	-----------------------------	--

5	Calculation of Council Tax Base 2017/18	5 - 8
----------	--	--------------

This report sets out council tax base calculations to be used for 2017/18. The level of council tax base set is used in the calculation of the council tax for 2017/18. Regulations require that the council tax base is set by 31st January prior to the start of the financial year.

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Contact Officer: Conrad Hall, Chief Finance Officer

Tel: 020 8937 6528

conrad.hall@brent.gov.uk

6	Representation of Political Groups	9 - 12
----------	---	---------------

At its meeting on 21 November 2016 Full Council reviewed and determined a representation of political groups on certain committees because of a change in membership of the Conservative and Brent Conservative Groups. Subsequently, appointments were made. As this Committee has three sub-committees, it has a statutory duty to review and determine the representative of political groups on its sub-committees as soon as practicable after Full Council's review. The Committee then has a duty to make appointments to the sub-committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.

Wards Affected:

Contact Officer: Debra Norman, Interim Chief Legal Officer

7 Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies

8 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Head of Executive and Member Services or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



Please remember to set 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.

This page is intentionally left blank



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 31 May 2016 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair) and Councillors Colwill, Farah, Hirani, Kabir (for McLennan), W Mitchell Murray and Southwood

Also present: Councillors Chohan

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors McLennan and Mashari

1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 March 2016 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

None.

4. **Deputations**

None

5. **Representation of Political Groups on Committees**

The committee considered the report setting out the rules to be applied during the course of reviewing representation of political groups on its sub-committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the size of the sub-committees be noted;
- (ii) that the allocation of seats on the sub-committees to each political group be agreed as follows:

Sub Committee	Size of Sub Cttee	Labour	Conservative	Brent Conservative

Pension Fund Sub-Committee	7	6	0	1
Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee	5	4	1	0
Staff Appeals Sub-Committee	5	4	0	1

6. **Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies**

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments be made:

PENSIONS SUB

CHOUDHARY (C)

DALY

KHAN

MILLER

NAHEERATHAN

SHAZHAD

VACANCY

Labour substitutes: DENSELOW, MOHER, PERRIN

PENSIONS BOARD

CRANE

KABIR

David Ewart (C) – Independent Chair

Trevor Dawson - pension scheme member

Bola George – trade union (unison) member

Euton Stewart – trade union (GMB) member

Angela Cattermole – employer member (non-Brent Council)

STAFF APPEALS

BRADLEY

CHOUDRY

MARQUIS

KETAN SHETH (C)

VACANCY

SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

BUTT

MCLENNAN

HIRANI

W MITCHELL MURRAY

COLWILL

Labour substitutes: FARAH, MASHARI, PAVEY, SOUTHWOOD

Conservative substitutes: KANSAGRA, MAURICE

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY
HARRISON
W MITCHELL MURRAY

EMPLOYEES' JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

EZEAJUGHI
KABIR
MILLER
MCLENNAN (C)
W MITCHELL MURRAY
M PATEL
KRUPA SHETH

Labour substitutes: ADEN, AHMED, HYLTON, NERVA, SHAHZAD,
SOUTHWOOD, CHAN, THOMAS

TEACHERS' JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

BRADLEY (C)
CONNEELY
CHAN
HARRISON
HODA-BENN
MOHER
TATLER

Labour substitutes: ALLIE, HOSSAIN, KABIR, LONG, MARQUIS, MILLER


7. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

M BUTT
Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

 Brent	<p>General Purposes Committee 8 December 2016</p> <p>Report from the Chief Finance Officer</p>
<p>Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p>Calculation of Council Tax Base 2017/2018</p>	

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out council tax base calculations to be used for 2017/18. The level of council tax base set is used in the calculation of the council tax for 2017/18. Regulations require that the council tax base is set by 31st January prior to the start of the financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To agree that:
- i. The collection rate for the council tax for 2017/18 is set at 97.63%.
 - ii. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the amount calculated by the council as its council tax base for 2017/18 is set at 93,319.

3. Detail

3.1. Background

- 3.1.1. The calculation of the tax base is one of the technical stages in the process of setting the council tax, which is scheduled for the Council Meeting on 27th February 2017.
- 3.1.2. Under regulations issued in 1992, the calculation must be carried out by 31st January prior to the start of the financial year
- 3.1.3. The calculation is based on the council tax base return submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government in October 2016, which is used in Government grant calculations. This sets out the factual number of Band D properties, after taking account of the level of council tax support

3.1.4. This figure then needs to be adjusted to reflect the fact that 100% collection of council tax will never be achieved. The council tax base set by the council takes account of what is eventually expected to be collected, not just by the end of the financial year in question.

3.2. Council Tax Collection Rate

3.2.1. Between 2001/02 and 2012/13 the council's lifetime collection rate was set at 97.5% as an assessment of the amount to be collected for the relevant year. For 2013/14 this was reduced to 96% to take account of the anticipated impact of households formerly receiving council tax benefit who now have to pay at least part of their council tax bill. In practice the effect of this has been less than anticipated, and an assumption of 97.63% eventual collection is recommended for 2017/18.

3.2.2. Analysis of collection to date for recent years is shown below. To understand the data, it should be noted that that council tax payment collection continues for several years after the payment was first due.

	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Net Collectable Debit (£m)	120.6	117.0	113.5	103.7	103.1
Cash Collected (£m)	116.5	113.3	110.3	101.3	100.5
Percentage collected at 25/11/2016	96.6%	96.8%	97.2%	97.6%	97.5%

3.2.3. Therefore there is scope to increase the eventual collection assumption. It is possible that collecting arrears on former CTB cases may still be difficult, but it is recommended that the 97.5% collection assumption for 2016/17 be slightly increased to 97.63% for 2017/18 as it is believed performance of council tax collection can be increased. This has the effect of increasing the Council Tax income assumption feeding in to the overall budget for the Council.

3.2.4. If an over-optimistic assumption of the achievable collection rate is made, at some later stage a deficit in the Collection Fund will have to be declared, resulting in the need to increase the level of Council Tax in that year. Alternatively if the assumed collection rate is exceeded, a surplus could be declared later on. For 2017/18 it is considered realistic to assume an overall eventual collection level of 97.63%, as outlined above.

3.3. Setting the Council Tax Base

3.3.1. There are currently a number of sizeable new housing developments taking place which will result in a significant number of new properties coming in to rating. The council tax base for 2017/18 has been estimated based on growth in the council tax base set by the council over the past three years.

3.3.2. There has also been a continued reduction in 16/17 in council tax support (CTS) compared to 2015/16, largely due to an increase in full or part-time employment. The total for CTS could increase again however, if economic conditions deteriorate.

3.3.3. There is uncertainty over the government's plan to reduce working tax credits and the extent to which this will reduce the assessed income of Council Tax Support claimants on low incomes. This is very likely to lead to an increase in the total of CTS which will be granted. The extent of this cannot be accurately determined until the reductions are finalised and then come in to effect, as each claimants' circumstances would have to be assessed.

3.3.4. The tax base for 2017/18 is as follows:

Band D equivalent properties = 95,589

Multiplied by:

The estimated rate of collection (97.63%)

3.3.5. This produces the following calculation: $95,589 \times 97.63\% = 93,319$

4. Financial Implications

4.1. The proposed council tax base for 2017/18 of 93,319 represents an increase of 4,065 over the figure for 2016/17. This will form part of the overall calculation of the Council's budget and it is in line with the assumptions made in the provisional budget reported to Cabinet in October 2016.

5. Legal Implications

5.1. The Council Tax Base is the equivalent number of Band D dwellings (after taking account of discounts and exemptions) which would raise the same amount of tax as the actual number of liable dwellings in the borough, with their actual spread of bands. The Band D equivalent total is then multiplied by the estimated collection rate for the year, to give the Council Tax Base figure. In the Council Tax calculation process to be undertaken at Full Council on 27th February 2017 this figure will be used to calculate the amount of tax to be levied for a Band D dwelling. The Council Tax level for each valuation band is then calculated by a fixed ratio which each band bears to the Band D figure. The Council's Constitution currently requires that the calculation of the Council Tax Base be carried out by the General Purposes Committee.

5.2. Section 11A of the 1992 Local Government Act enables the Secretary of State to designate by regulations: (i) Categories of properties in respect of which the discount available in respect of empty properties may be reduced to a percentage of at least 10% (section 11A(3)); and (ii) Categories of properties in respect of which the discount may be reduced to any percentage or eliminated entirely (section 11A(4)). In the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 the Secretary of State has designated furnished

dwellings which are not the sole or main residence of an individual for the purposes of section 11A(3) (except caravan pitches and boat moorings) and unfurnished unoccupied properties for the purposes of section 11A(4). Sections 11 and 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 give billing authorities the discretion to vary the discounts applicable to specific classes of empty properties, second homes and long term empty properties from 1 April 2013.

6. Diversity Implications

- 6.1. The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications arising from it.

7. Staffing Implications

- 7.1. None arising directly from this report.

8. Background Information

Local Government Finance Act 2012

The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012

Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003

CONRAD HALL
Chief Finance Officer



General Purposes Committee

8 December 2016

Report from the Chief Legal Officer

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Representation of Political Groups

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting on 21 November 2016 Full Council reviewed and determined the representation of political groups on certain committees because of a change in membership of the Conservative and Brent Conservative Groups. Subsequently, appointments were made.
- 1.2 As this Committee has three sub-committees, it has a statutory duty to review and determine the representation of political groups on its sub-committees as soon as practicable after Full Council's review. The Committee then has a duty to make appointments to the sub-committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.

2.0 Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Agree the size of the three sub-committees; and
- 2.2 Agree the allocation of the opposition group seat on the three sub-committees to the Conservative Group.
- 2.3 Make appointments to the three sub-committees giving effect to the wishes of the Conservative Group.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 On 21 November 2016, Councillor Davidson, who was formerly a member of the Brent Conservative Group, joined the Conservative Group. As a result,

Full Council reviewed and determined the representation of political groups on certain committees, and subsequently made appointments in accordance with the wishes of the political groups concerned.

- 3.2 As this Committee has three sub-committees, it has a statutory duty to review and determine the representation of political groups on its sub-committees as soon as practicable after Full Council's review. The Committee then has a duty to make appointments to the sub-committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.
- 3.3. The change in membership of a single opposition member does not affect the Labour Group's allocation of seats based on current sub-committee sizes. Nor does it affect current Labour Group appointments.
- 3.4 The allocation of seats is determined by applying the political balance principles prescribed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and supplemented by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. These principles are set out below and are designed to ensure that the political composition of committees and sub-committees, as far as reasonably practicable, replicate the political composition of Full Council.
- 3.5 The political balance principles are:
- (i) That not all the seats on the sub-committee are allocated to the same political group.
 - (ii) That the majority of the seats on the sub-committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership.
 - (iii) Subject to paragraphs (i) and to (ii) above, that the number of the seats on the sub-committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that sub-committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Council.
- 3.6 The current membership of the Council is 63 members consisting of 56 Labour Group councillors (which remains unchanged since the Committee's previous review); 4 Conservative Group councillors (which is an increase of 1); 2 Brent Conservative Group councillors (which is a reduction of 1) and 1 independent councillor (who was previously a Liberal Democrat councillor).
- 3.7 The application of the principles listed above results in the following allocation of seats:

Committee	Sub Committee	Size of Sub-Cttee	Labour (88.88%)	Conservative (6.35%)	Brent Conservative (3.17%)
General	Pension Fund	7	6	1	0

Purposes	Sub-Committee				
	Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee	5	4	1	0
	Staff Appeals Sub-Committee	5	4	1	0

- 3.7 Based on sub-committee sizes of 7 and 5, there is no change to the allocation of seats to the Labour Group or the appointment of its members to the sub-committees. As the Conservative Group have twice as many members as the Brent Conservative Group, the only remaining seat on each sub-committee has to be allocated to the Conservative Group. For the purposes of the third principle listed above, the composition of each sub-committee has to be considered in isolation and, as far as possible, reflect the membership of Full Council. This can only be achieved by allocating the single opposition group seat on each sub-committee to the Conservative Group.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 These are addressed in the body of the report.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 None.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

Debra Norman, Chief Legal Officer, Resources Department, Brent Council, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FTJ Tel: 020 8937 4101

Looqman Desai, Senior Solicitor (Governance), Resources Department, Brent Council, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FTJ Tel: 020 8937 1366

This page is intentionally left blank