Appendix K
Update on Budget consultation February 2017

Brent Connects

1.1 Five consultation events were held between 12 January 2016 and 3 February 2016 at locations throughout the borough. The meetings had the following levels of attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 January</td>
<td>Brent Connects Wembley</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 January</td>
<td>Brent Connects Harlesden</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 January</td>
<td>Brent Connects Kilburn</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 February</td>
<td>Brent Connects Willesden</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 February</td>
<td>Brent Connects Kingsbury &amp; Kenton</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 The Leader of the Council delivered a presentation outlining the financial position and the difficult budget choices faced by the Council. The Leader and deputy Leader then took questions from the audience and provided answers, supported by senior officers where appropriate for matters of technical detail.

1.3 Feedback and opinions offered from these events varied considerably. As an example of the range of opinions expressed:

- one resident stated it felt like they were paying for care twice, once through charges, and also through council tax rises;
- whereas another thought the council was between a rock and a hard place, and had no choice but to raise council tax.

Have your say pop up sessions

1.3 In addition to the Brent Connects consultations, three pop up sessions were held in supermarkets across the borough for residents to comment on the budget proposals and ask questions. Again, these sessions were led by the Leader and supported by senior officers.

Online consultation

1.4 The online consultation closed on 3 February 2017 and 84 people responded. Their responses have varied considerably from person to person. Taking the council tax increase as an example, several people have expressed support for
it, others have opposed any rise, a handful have proposed that council tax rises
should be limited to just inflation and some have made no comment either way.
It is important to note that some of the proposals made could not be legally
implemented by the council as they would breach the council’s obligations or
the council lacks the legal powers necessary to implement some of the
suggestiosns, such as new taxes. Overall, no clear themes emerge from the
responses to the consultation.

1.5 All of these consultation responses are important. Members need to have
regard to them, but are not obliged to follow the suggestions made, and
members could not legally implement some of the suggestions made. It is
relevant to note that the consultees are, statistically speaking, “self selecting”
and therefore not necessarily reflective of opinion in the borough as a whole,
not are they necessarily statistically significant. On the other hand, the people
who have responded have chosen to take the time to review the council’s
proposals and to contribute their thoughts, and often their views will be
representative of the views of a much larger number of people.