

## SUMMONS ITEM 11 (ii)

### FULL COUNCIL 16<sup>th</sup> May 2005

#### **Motion selected for debate by Councillor Paul Lorber, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.**

##### It's time to Scrap Council Tax.

This Council notes :

1. that thanks to Tony Blair, Ken Livingstone, and Labour controlling Brent Council since 1998, Council Tax in Brent has more than doubled since 1997.

2. that despite New Labour repeatedly threatening to “cap” Councils that set rises of over 5 per cent, Ken Livingstone has consistently flouted this figure, and the Government chose a limit of 5.5% this year so as to not cap the New Labour London Mayor.

(For the avoidance of doubt, scrapping Ken's unnecessary self-promotion and propaganda expenditure is all that would have been required, and none of the money allocated for extra Police would need to be touched.)

3. that 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 was the re-valuation date for homes in England and Scotland, and post-Election Council Tax hikes will be based on property values on this day

4. that a shortage of Housing has contributed to the fastest house price rises for Brent properties in the whole of London.

5. that high property prices in Brent will be particularly bad news for local people facing an imminent Council Tax banding revaluation

6. that re-valuation will be costly, waste vast amounts of money and if the Welsh experience is anything to go by – where bills have risen up to 22% over and above local Council Tax increases - a third of all residents will find themselves in a higher band.

7. that Council Tax is a Tory Tax that is bureaucratic, takes no account of a person's ability to pay and is particularly unfair to people on low and fixed incomes, such as Pensioners and single households. This is highlighted most starkly by :

- the poorest 10% paying over 4 times as much of their income in Council Tax than the richest 10%

- the poorest fifth of pensioners paying over 6 times more than the richest fifth of non-pensioners in Council Tax, as a proportion of their income

In view of the above, we call on the Council to support the campaign to scrap Council Tax and replace this with a fair, less bureaucratic system of Local Income Tax that piggybacks national Income Tax and reflects people's ability to pay.