



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Tuesday 24 January 2012 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor John (Chair), Councillor Butt (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beswick, Kansagra, Long and Lorber

Apologies were received from: Councillors Brown, Matthews, J Moher and Thomas

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

None.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 November 2011 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED:

that approval be given to the appointment of Councillor Krupa Sheth to the following outside body:

Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Greater London.

4. **Calculation of Council Tax Base 2012/13**

The Committee received a report which set out council tax base calculations to be used for the municipal year 2012/13. David Huberman, Finance Manager, advised that this was a standard stage in the process of setting the council tax, scheduled for the Council meeting on 27 February 2012. He continued that the council was required by regulations to set the council tax base by 31 January prior to the start of the financial year. He recommended that for 2012/13 the assumed collection rate for the council tax be set at 97.5% and the council tax base set at 98,398.

The Finance Manager explained that the calculation was based on the council tax base submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government in October 2011. He continued that for the financial year 2012/13, the tax base used in grant calculations was 100,642 band D equivalent properties, which assumes 100% collection rate. In practice, the council tax collection rate will be less than

100% due to a combination of changes to the collectable amount due to new properties and fluctuations in discounts and exemptions, , and an allowance for irrecoverable debts.

In the ensuing discussion, Councillor Lorber queried why the collection rate had been set for 97.5% for the past two years and put forward an amended motion for the collection rate to be increased to 98%. In response, David Huberman clarified that a higher collection rate could lead to a shortfall in collection which could result in a deficit in the following year if the rate was not achieved. He emphasised the need to strike a balance and in arriving at the recommended rate, the Council's external auditors had paid close attention to collection assumptions to avoid making an over-optimistic assumption. He advised the Committee that the recommended collection rate of 97.5% for 2012/13 was consistent with comparable London Local Authorities.

Members voted on the amended motion in the name of Councillor Lorber which was declared lost.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the collection rate for the council tax for 2012/13 be set at 97.5%.
- (ii) that the amount calculated by the council as its council tax base for 2012/13 be set at 98,398, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992.

(Councillor Lorber asked that his dissent against the above decisions be recorded).

5. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm

A JOHN
Chair