

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2015 starting at 7.00pm

Present

Councillor Stephen Carr (Chairman)
Councillors Graham Arthur, Robert Evans, Peter Morgan
Colin Smith, Tim Stevens and Stephen Wells

Also present

Councillors Nicholas Bennett, Eric Bosshard, Peter Fookes, William Huntington-Thresher, Pauline Tunnicliffe and Angela Wilkins

2015/16 COUNCIL TAX

FSD15009

Report FSD15009 identified the final issues affecting the 2015/16 revenue budget and sought recommendations to the Council on the level of the Bromley element of the 2015/16 Council Tax. The report also sought final approval of the schools budget. A replacement set of recommendations were tabled for the meeting as was a replacement Appendix 2 ("*Summary of Draft 2015/16 Revenue Budget – Portfolio*") to the report. Comments from PDS Committees in considering the initial draft budget were also provided.

Confirmation of the final GLA precept would be reported to the Council meeting on 23rd February 2015.

Report FSD15009 reflected the Council's approach to not only achieve a legal and financially balanced budget in 2015/16 but to have measures in place to deal with the medium term financial position (2016/17 to 2018/19).

Referring to benefits provided by the KeyRing scheme, Councillor Fookes (Penge and Cator), suggested that long term savings could possibly be made by helping to fund the scheme, perhaps by charging a levy for leaving a property empty. Recognising the scheme was appreciated, the Portfolio Holder for Care Services indicated however that it would not be possible for the Council to provide funds for the scheme in the current financial climate.

The Chief Executive outlined the approach taken to the consideration of savings and priorities in arriving at the draft 2015/16 budget. It was also necessary to consider the financial outlook for the Council for the forthcoming two years. The Leader added that this was the start of a process which would only become more difficult. It was necessary to secure a balanced budget. Should decisions be taken that cause particular difficulties, Members would be prepared to re-consider further and take action as necessary to help rectify the difficulties.

RESOLVED that:

(1) Council be recommended to:

- (a) approve the schools budget of £99.1 million which matches the estimated level of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG);**
- (b) approve the draft revenue budgets (as at Appendix 2 to Report FSD15009) for 2015/16 to include the following updated changes -**
 - (i) additional core grant funding of £202k in 2015/16**
 - (ii) reduction in Discretionary Housing payments funding from £683k in 2014/15 to £509k in 2015/16 (variation of £174k), with a corresponding reduction in the Discretionary Housing Payments in the 2015/16 Budget;**
- (c) agree that Chief Officers identify alternative savings within their departmental budgets where it is not possible to realise any proposed savings reported to the previous Executive meeting;**
- (d) approve the following provisions for levies for inclusion in the budget for 2015/16 -**

	£'000
London Pension Fund Authority	475
London Boroughs Grant Committee	340
Environment Agency (Flood defence etc)	236
Lee Valley Regional Park	376
Total	1,427

- (e) approve a revised Central Contingency sum of £13,817k to reflect the changes in (b) and (d);**
- (f) approve the revised draft 2015/16 revenue budgets to reflect the changes detailed above;**
- (g) set a 1.99% increase in Bromley's council tax for 2015/16, compared with 2014/15, and, based upon their consultation exercise, an assumed 1.34% reduction in the GLA precept;**
- (h) note the latest position on the GLA precept, to be finalised in the overall Council Tax figure to be reported to full Council (see section 11 of Report FSD15009);**

- (i) approve the approach to reserves outlined by the Director of Finance (see Appendix 4 to Report FSD15009);
- (j) the Director of Finance be authorised to report any further changes directly to Council on 23rd February 2015.

(2) Council Tax 2015/16 – Statutory Calculations and Resolutions (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) -

Subject to (1) (a) to (j) above, if the formal Council Tax Resolution as detailed below is approved, the total Band D Council Tax will be as follows:

	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	Increase/decrease (-) %
Bromley	1,010.07	1,030.14	1.99
GLA *	299.00	295.00	-1.34
Total	1,309.07	1,325.14	1.23

* The GLA Precept may need to be amended once the actual GLA budget is set.

(3) Council be recommended to formally resolve as follows:

- (i) it be noted that the Council Tax Base for 2015/16 is 125,130;
- (ii) calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 is £128,901k;
- (iii) that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the Act) -
 - (a) £560,346k being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act;
 - (b) £431,445k being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;
 - (c) £128,901k being the amount by which the aggregate at (iii) (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (iii) (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year;
 - (d) £1,030.14 being the amount at (iii) (c) above, divided by (i) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year;

(iv) to note that the Greater London Authority (GLA) has issued a precept to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below (N.B. the GLA precept figure may need to be amended once the actual GLA budget is set);

(v) that the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2015/16 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
686.76	801.22	915.68	1,030.14	1,259.06	1,487.98	1,716.90	2,060.28

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
196.67	229.44	262.22	295.00	360.56	426.11	491.67	590.00

AGGREGATE OF COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
883.4	1,030.6	1,177.9	1,325.1	1,619.6	1,914.0	2208.5	2,650.2
3	6	0	4	2	9	7	8

(vi) that the Council hereby determines that its relevant basic amount of council tax for the financial year 2015/16, which reflects a 1.99% increase, is not excessive. The Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2015/16 sets out the principles which the Secretary of State has determined will apply to local authorities in England in 2015/16. The Council is required to determine whether its relevant basic amount of Council Tax is excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(4) The Director of Finance be authorised to report any further changes directly to Council on 23rd February 2015.