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Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

COUNCIL MEETING

**7.30 pm Wednesday, 30 January 2013
At Council Chamber - Town Hall**

Members of the Council of the London Borough of Havering are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council at the time and place indicated for the transaction of the following business

**Acting Assistant
Chief Executive**

**For information about the meeting please contact:
Ian Buckmaster Tel: 01708 432431
ian.buckmaster@havering.gov.uk**



Please note that this meeting will be webcast.

**Members of the public who do not wish to appear
in the webcast will be able to sit in the balcony,
which is not in camera range.**

AGENDA

1 PRAYERS

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence (if any)

3 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 26)

To sign as a true record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 28 November 2012.

4 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any pecuniary interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

Members may still disclose any pecuniary interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

To receive announcements (if any)

6 PETITIONS

Councillor David Durant has given notice of his intention to present a petition.

NOTE: The deadline for amendments to items 7 - 12 following is midnight, Monday 28 January 2013

7 THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY (Pages 27 - 32)

To consider a report of the Cabinet

8 LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (Pages 33 - 116)

To consider a report of the Cabinet

9 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 AND 2014/15 (Pages 117 - 120)

To consider a report of the Cabinet

10 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME: AMENDMENT - INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR STANDARDS OF MEMBERS' CONDUCT (Pages 121 - 122)

To consider a report of the Governance Committee

11 KEY DECISIONS - AMENDMENT OF DEFINITION (Pages 123 - 124)

To consider a report of the Governance Committee

12 CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS - ARRANGING FOR REVIEW BY AN OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Pages 125 - 126)

To consider a report of the Governance Committee

13 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (Pages 127 - 134)

See attached paper

14 MOTIONS FOR DEBATE (Pages 135 - 140)

See attached paper

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING
Havering Town Hall, Romford
28 November 2012 (7.30pm – 11pm)**

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Lynden Thorpe) in the Chair

Councillors: Councillors June Alexander, Michael Armstrong, Clarence Barrett, Robert Benham, Becky Bennett, Sandra Binion, Jeffrey Brace, Denis Breading, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Dennis Bull, Andrew Curtin, Keith Darvill, Osman Dervish, Nic Dodin, David Durant, Brian Eagling, Ted Eden, Roger Evans, Gillian Ford, Georgina Galpin, Peter Gardner, Linda Hawthorn, Linda Van den Hende, Steven Kelly, Pam Light, Mark Logan, Barbara Matthews, Paul McGeary, Robby Misir, Ray Morgon, Pat Murray, Eric Monday, Denis O'Flynn, Barry Oddy, Fred Osborne*, Ron Ower, Garry Pain, Roger Ramsey, Paul Rochford, Geoffrey Starns, Billy Taylor, Barry Tebbutt, Frederick Thompson, Linda Trew, Jeffrey Tucker, Melvin Wallace, Keith Wells, Damian White, Michael White and John Wood

* for part of the meeting

9 Members' guests and a representative of the press were also present.

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Michael Deon Burton, Lesley Kelly and John Mylod.

The Mayor advised Members and the public of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

Prayers were said by Father Roderick Hingley, Mayor's Chaplain

The meeting closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

50 **MINUTES (agenda item 3)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 September 2012 were before the Council for approval.

The minutes were **AGREED** without division and it was **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held 19 September 2012 be signed as a correct record.

51 **COUNCILLORS MARK LOGAN AND FRED OSBORNE**

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor welcomed Councillors Mark Logan and Fred Osborne on their returns, following recent spells of illness.

52 **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS (agenda item 4)**

Councillors Rebecca Bennett, Sandra Binion, Paul McGeary, Barry Oddy and Michael White each declared a non-pecuniary interest in the subject matter of agenda item 12C (motion: Hospital A&E Services in North East London).

Councillor White indicated that he would not participate in the debate or vote on the motion.

53 **ANNOUNCEMENTS (agenda item 5)**

The Mayor's Announcements are attached as **Appendix 1** to these minutes.

54 **MOTIONS WITHDRAWN AND PROCEDURAL MOTION**

With the consent of the Council, the Independent Residents' Group Motions at agenda items **12A (Olympic torch relay)** and **12B (Housing Policies)** were both withdrawn.

A procedural motion was proposed, that the order of agenda item 12 (Motions) be changed, so that the remaining motions would be taken in the following order:

- 12D (Number of Councillors)**
- 12C (Hospital A&E services) and**
- 12E (Permitted development rules)**

The procedural motion was agreed without division and it was **RESOLVED accordingly**.

55 **PETITIONS (agenda item 6)**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 23, petitions were presented as follows, by Councillors:

- Councillor Linda Trew - from residents of Hainault Road, seeking traffic calming measures for vehicles travelling between the A12 Eastern Avenue and Collier Row Lane

Councillor Pat Murray - seeking additional residents' parking facilities in Chippenham Road

It was **NOTED** that each petition would be passed to Committee Administration for attention in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme.

56 **PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF PLEASURE GROUND BYELAW ON CYCLING (agenda item 7)**

The Ingrebourne Way Sustrans Connect2 project aimed to form a continuous, fully accessible walking and cycling route from Noak Hill to the River Thames at Rainham, as far as possible following the River Ingrebourne, using a number of parks and open spaces, as well as highway space, on its way.

The Council's current pleasure ground byelaws provided for qualified prohibition of cycling in many of the Council's parks. In order to permit cycling on signed, designated routes through Parks it was now proposed to make a single minor amendment to the existing byelaws, adopting the Department for Communities & Local Government model byelaw on cycling and amending byelaw 9(ii) to provide that:

No person shall without reasonable excuse ride a cycle in the ground except in any part of the ground where there is a right of way for cycles [or on a designated route for cycling].

The Governance Committee had now recommended that steps be taken to secure that amendment to the byelaw.

The recommendations of the Governance Committee were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

- 1 **That the new model byelaw on cycling as approved by the Department for Communities & Local Government be adopted.**
- 2 **That, simultaneous with the adoption of the new byelaw the current byelaw 9(ii) of the 1990 Pleasure Ground Byelaws be revoked**
- 3 **That the Assistant Chief Executive be authorised to take all steps necessary to secure the revocation of the existing byelaw and its replacement by the new byelaw as soon as practicable, including publication of all necessary notices and the securing of all necessary consents.**

57 **PROPOSED NEW PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (agenda item 8)**

In November 2011, the Boundary Commission for England had published proposals for new Parliamentary Constituencies for Havering, two of which would be wholly within the borough, with a third partly covering Havering and parts of eastern Barking & Dagenham.

On the recommendation of the Governance Committee, the Council had subsequently expressed the view to the Commission that the proposals were unacceptable as they stood, and alternatives were suggested.

The Commission, having considered the representations submitted, had prepared new proposals, broadly retaining the existing constituency boundaries (for Havering). The constituencies now proposed were as follows:

Constituency (Electorate)	Including the following Wards
Dagenham & Rainham (75,880)	Elm Park; Rainham & Wennington; and South Hornchurch (plus 7 wards in Barking & Dagenham, from Chadwell Heath in the north to River in the south)
Hornchurch & Upminster (79,568)	Cranham; Emerson Park; Gooshays; Hacton; Harold Wood; Heaton; St Andrew's; and Upminster
Romford (79,271)	Brooklands; Havering Park; Hylands; Mawneys; Pettits; Romford Town; and Squirrels Heath (plus Eastbrook Ward in Barking & Dagenham)

In general, the new proposals retained the current constituency boundaries, with the Eastbrook ward of Barking & Dagenham – which includes the Dagenham portion of Rush Green – added to the Romford constituency.

The Governance Committee had concluded that, while not entirely ideal, the new proposals were a significant improvement upon the unacceptable initial proposals and therefore recommended that the revised proposals be welcomed.

The recommendations of the Governance Committee were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

That the revised proposals for the Borough's Constituencies be welcomed.

58 **REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (agenda item 9)**

The current procedure for the consideration of traffic management proposals by the Highway Advisory Committee often resulted in the service proposal being considered multiple times by the Advisory Committee. It was proposed to streamline the work for the Advisory Committee while maintaining the consideration of representation on highway schemes.

Following review of the working of the Advisory Committee, it had been concluded the level of Member oversight involved appeared excessive compared with almost all other decisions made by the Council which affected the physical environment, and also resulted in staff time being deployed on schemes having little or no likelihood of proceeding.

It had therefore been proposed that the role and functioning of the Advisory Committee should be amended to streamline the current arrangements whilst maintaining the effective consideration of traffic schemes.

Accordingly, the Committee now submitted the following proposals:

- (a) That the general practice of reporting draft schemes to the Advisory Committee prior to them being sent out for public consultation cease, but that the Head of StreetCare may refer a draft scheme to the Advisory Committee if appropriate, with a minor change to the terms of reference to reflect this.
- (b) That the Head of StreetCare be authorised to determine whether initial requests for traffic schemes proceed further or not based on criteria approved by the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment following consultation with the Committee.
- (c) That traffic schemes fully delegated to the Head of StreetCare be extended to include 'At any time' waiting restrictions at bends and junctions.
- (d) That Paragraph (a) of the Committee Procedure Rules for the Committees be amended to "*The Highway Advisory Committee will consider representations on all parking schemes which are not subject to officer delegation.*"
- (e) That Highway related matters outside the terms of the Committee are no longer considered.

The necessary changes to the Council's Constitution are set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

The recommendations of the Governance Committee were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The changes to the Highways Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules and to the Head of StreetCare's delegated powers be approved, as set out in Appendix 2.

59 **APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR STANDARDS OF MEMBERS' CONDUCT (agenda item 10)**

In consequence of the new statutory regime for regulating Members' standards of conduct introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the Appointments Sub-Committee had interviewed four candidates for the appointment of an Independent Person for Standards of Members' Conduct and now nominated for the appointment **Keith Mitchell**, who was considered to possess the qualities needed to undertake the statutory role of Independent Person.

As there would be occasions when the Independent Person would be unable to act (for example because of illness or holiday, or because of a possible conflict of interest), a deputising arrangement was needed. Redbridge Council had indicated that it was willing to enter into an informal mutual support arrangement whereby the Independent Person appointed by that Council would be available when necessary to deputise for this Council's Independent Person, and *vice versa*.

Redbridge had appointed Kevin Madden as its Independent Person. Mr Madden had formerly been an Independent Member of this Council's Standards Committee. The Sub-Committee now recommended that the arrangement be approved.

The nomination and recommendation of the Appointments Sub-Committee were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. **Keith Mitchell be appointed as the Council's Independent Person for Standards of Members' conduct, for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011.**
2. **The Independent Person, Kevin Madden, appointed by Redbridge Council be appointed to deputise for the Council's Independent Person when necessary; and that the Council approve this Council's Independent Person deputising for Redbridge.**

Mr Mitchell, who was present at the meeting, was introduced to Members.

60 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (agenda item 11)**

Eight questions were asked and replies given.

The texts of those questions, and their answers, together with those not asked orally, are set out in **Appendix 3** to these minutes.

61 **NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS (agenda item 12D)**

Motion on behalf the Independent Residents' Group

That this Council explore the possibilities of reducing the number of Elected Councillors to 2 per ward throughout the borough which would make a total of 36 in the borough.

Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read

This Council will give consideration to the appropriate number of councillors for each ward following full consultation of councillors and the public upon the next review of the composition of London Boroughs.

Following debate, the Administration amendment was **CARRIED** by 45 votes to 0 (see division 1). The Administration amendment was then **CARRIED** as the substantive motion by 45 votes to 0 (see division 2).

RESOLVED that:

This Council will give consideration to the appropriate number of councillors for each ward following full consultation of councillors and the public upon the next review of the composition of London Boroughs.

62 **HOSPITAL A&E SERVICES IN NORTH EAST LONDON (agenda item 12C)**

Motion on behalf the Labour Group

This Council notes with concern the recent report of BHRUT presented to the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and in particular:-

- 1) That the timetable for the proposed improvements to the A&E Department at Queens Hospital will not be met;
- 2) That the required developments in community health to enable improvements to be delivered has been delayed; and
- 3) The consequent adverse financial impact identified in the report and its negative affect on the local health economy.

This Council calls upon NHS North East London and the City to reconsider its decision to close the A&E services at King George Hospital and develop policies to provide full A&E services at both Queens and King George Hospitals to meet the needs of residents in the outer north east London Boroughs of Havering, Redbridge and Baking & Dagenham.

Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read

This Council notes with concern the recent report of BHRUT presented to the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and agrees with the Secretary of State's decision that the mergers of A&E on the Queen's Hospital site should only be done when it is clinically safe to do so.

Following debate, the Administration amendment was **CARRIED** by 29 votes to 19 (see division 3); and it was then **CARRIED** as the substantive motion without division.

RESOLVED that:

This Council notes with concern the recent report of BHRUT presented to the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and agrees with the Secretary of State's decision that the mergers of A&E on the Queen's Hospital site should only be done when it is clinically safe to do so.

63 **PROPOSED RELAXATION OF PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RULES (agenda item 12E)**

Motion on behalf the Residents' Group

Further to the government's proposals to relax planning rules thus allowing house extensions of up to eight metres (26ft) to be built without planning permission or consideration for neighbouring properties, this council agrees to explore the following options and implement the action that will bring about the most significant impact:

- a) To write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government conveying our serious reservations
- b) To join together with other councils expressing similar concerns (e.g. LB Richmond-upon-Thames and LB Sutton) to express our joint concerns
- c) To call upon the Local Government Association to express a collective concern to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read

This Council notes that its Leader has written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government conveying our serious

reservations with regards to the Government's proposals to relax planning rules thus allowing house extensions of up to eight metres (26ft) to be built without planning permission or consideration for neighbouring properties and recommend the following action;-

- 1) To join together with other councils expressing similar concerns (e.g. LB Richmond-upon-Thames and LB Sutton) to express our joint concerns
- 2) To call upon the Local Government Association to express a collective concern to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

In view of the hour and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.1(b), the motion was considered without debate and, on being put to the vote, the Administration amendment was **CARRIED** by 29 votes to 19 (see division 4); and it was then **CARRIED** as the substantive motion without division

RESOLVED that:

This Council notes that its Leader has written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government conveying our serious reservations with regards to the Government's proposals to relax planning rules thus allowing house extensions of up to eight metres (26ft) to be built without planning permission or consideration for neighbouring properties and recommend the following action;-

- 1) **To join together with other councils expressing similar concerns (e.g. LB Richmond-upon-Thames and LB Sutton) to express our joint concerns**
- 2) **To call upon the Local Government Association to express a collective concern to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.**

64 **VOTING RECORD**

The record of voting divisions is attached as **Appendix 4**.

Mayor
30 January 2013

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

What a spectacular autumn this has been for Havering.

We were extremely honoured to have Her Majesty The Queen visit Drapers' Academy in Harold Hill last month.

She spent a full morning there, and officially named the main hall as the Diamond Jubilee Hall. She was serenaded by the school choir, watched pupils doing science experiments, and joined them for lunch in the school canteen. It was a wonderful day for all involved and made us very proud that Her Majesty had chosen to visit our lovely borough in what is her glorious Diamond Jubilee year.

Last month I was delighted to see thousands of local residents and visitors thronging the streets of Romford to cheer on the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment – who we also know locally as The Vikings.

They were exercising their right to march through the town centre, as they have the Freedom of the Borough of Havering. They marched proudly up from South Street to the Market Place, where I had the immense honour of helping to inspect the troops. The Royal Anglians are a true credit to this borough and it was a privilege to see them in full uniform, with their band playing, drums beating, and colours flying.

On a more sombre note, I was among the dignitaries who laid a wreath on Remembrance Sunday in Coronation Gardens, Romford. It was an extremely moving service and I was very proud to represent the Council. I was joined by more than 1,200 residents, local groups and veterans, who had also wanted to pay their respects and say a quiet thank you to those brave souls who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom today.

Remembrance ceremonies also took place that morning across Havering, including in Rainham, Hornchurch, Harold Hill, Havering-atte-Bower, Upminster, Collier Row and Elm Park. And in January, we will again pay our respects at Holocaust Memorial Day.

Last week, I was very happy to see this Council Chamber full of residents, who were attending the very first Havering Community Questions event. This event was very important, in terms of local democracy, and the panel were able to meet and engage with many people and talk about a wide range of issues. I look forward to the next meeting!

And did you know that we also helped stage a special Q&A session with students at Havering College? The event gave 150 young people the chance to debate issues which affect and concern them with some prominent people, including the human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell.

It was chaired by the BBC journalist Richard Lindley and was a superb success. I enjoyed watching it very much, and I know the students had a good time taking part. They filmed the event and are editing it right now, to put on the YouTube website.

Some snippets of good news now:

We heard some brilliant news yesterday – Havering has done exceptionally well in the Ofsted primary school league tables. We are joint 25th best of all local authorities nationally, with 79% of our pupils attending schools which are described as ‘good or outstanding’, and we are joint 11th best in London. It just proves that Havering really is ‘top of the class’!

The accolades continue to come in for Havering’s banking protocol scheme, which has been shortlisted in the prestigious Local Government Chronicle Awards 2013.

Banking protocol is a very important scheme. It sees the Council working with local banks and other partners to protect elderly and vulnerable people from having their savings plundered by conmen. For example, if a bank cashier is concerned that an elderly person is withdrawing a large sum of money, they can take swift action to find out why and, if necessary, protect them.

Also in the LGC Awards, our Havering 2014 programme, to make the Council more efficient to meet savings targets while protecting frontline services, has been recognised in the Business Transformation category. The awards will be judged in January.

Over two days this week, I had the great pleasure of handing out 70 awards to our parks and StreetCare staff, who had taken part in the equivalent of NVQ qualifications. We are all so proud of them and their achievements.

I was delighted to meet some of the borough’s most green-fingered gardeners who had won the Havering in Bloom awards. Over the past year, many residents have been busy digging, planting, potting and growing, and it was a pleasure to see the ‘fruits’ of their labours!

And I was honoured to attend our Caring Neighbours Awards ceremony, which is organised by the Over 50s Forum. It was very touching to see how many of our residents, young and old, have been quietly working behind the scenes to help and look after their neighbours. It’s nice that these unsung heroes receive some recognition for their compassion and good deeds. This is the true definition of community spirit!

We are in the midst of our traditional Christmas lights and Christmas Fayres season. I hope you enjoyed the switch-on events we have already had in Romford, Elm Park and Hornchurch.

We still have Christmas Fayres and events to come in Rainham this Saturday; Harold Hill next Thursday; and Collier Row next Friday. It is a wonderful way to welcome in the winter months.

And therefore may I be one of the first to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Finally, I’d like to invite all of our Councillors to join me for a Christmas Reception in the Mayor’s Parlour and Committee Room 1 on Wednesday, December 19 at 6.30pm.

CHANGES TO HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

1. The terms of reference of the Highway Advisory Committee be amended to:
 - To advise the Council's Executive on local highway and traffic management schemes.
 - To consider representation made as a result of public consultation to proposed schemes
 - To make recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment on the implementation of proposed schemes

2. Paragraph (a) of the Committee Procedure Rules specific to the Highways Advisory Committee be amended to:
 - (a) The Highway Advisory Committee will consider any proposal for a parking scheme which is referred to it by a member within 7 days of the proposal being notified to members via Calendar Brief, and all representations made on all parking schemes which are not subject to officer delegation.

3. The delegated powers of the Head of StreetCare be amended as follows:
 - (u) To authorise the creation, amendment and removal of disabled, persons' parking bays, footway parking bays and at any time waiting restrictions at bends and road junctions.
 - (r) To approve local highway management schemes in principle for public consultation.
 - (gg) To approve or reject for further consideration proposals made to the Council for local highway management schemes in accordance with the criteria agreed from time to time by the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment, provided that the proposal has previously been notified to members via Calendar Brief and no member has requested within 7 days of the notification that the proposal be referred to the Highways Advisory Committee for consideration

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Note: Questions 1 to 8 were answered at the meeting. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.6(a), the remainder were treated as if put for written answer

1 PARKING AT LAKESIDE SHOPPING CENTRE

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

In a recent consultation regarding the expansion of Lakeside Shopping Centre, this Council commented that 'Havering considers the proposal is unacceptable because it makes no commitment to the introduction of a parking charging and management regime. Free parking will give Lakeside an unreasonable competitive advantage over other town centres in Essex and outer London including Romford.'

Would the Cabinet Member expand upon why he feels that Lakeside should introduce parking charges?

Answer:

Havering Council considers that the provision of free car parking allows Lakeside to enjoy an unreasonable competitive advantage over other town centres in Essex and Outer London, including Romford. This advantage is derived from promoting and prioritising customer travel by car, over other less environmentally damaging forms of transport, with customers being attracted to Lakeside from an extensive area.

Havering is keen to tackle congestion and rising traffic levels in the borough to ensure that it remains an attractive place for people to live, work and do business. Lakeside's ability to attract significant numbers of car-borne customers through the provision of free parking not only undermines the Council's efforts to reduce traffic levels, but also poses a threat to the vitality of Romford Town Centre and other town centres in the borough. The Council is keen to protect Romford and other shopping centres, to ensure that Havering residents continue to have good local opportunities for employment and leisure activities.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member did not disagree that an offer of free parking in the run to Christmas might be helpful but reminded the questioner that there had been considerable investment in the Romford Town Centre and income from car parking fees played a considerable part in paying for that.

2 BUS STOP, BROADWAY, RAINHAM

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

To remove bus route congestion and enhance the Rainham Village Conservation Area can the Administration assist local residents and councillors in preventing them from using it as a changeover.

Answer:

Following a similar request in the summer, officers contacted Transport for London who responded that it would not be possible to move the bus stop.

For information, however, I can inform the Councillor that there are plans to create a new bus stop at the War Memorial opposite the existing stop outside the Redberry Guest House. The carriageway is of sufficient width to accommodate this and has been approved by TfL.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member agreed to meet the questioner on site in due course to review the situation once the new traffic scheme had been implemented but reminded the Council of the difficulties that had been experienced with TfL elsewhere in getting changes made,

3 USE OF WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES AT FROG ISLAND

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

From last month Bedford Borough Council entered into a six year contract with Shanks to manage the local authority's black bin waste. This will amount to treating some 50,000 tonnes per annum, which had previously been sent to landfill and incineration, saving Bedford approximately £1 million per year. This process will be undertaken using the mechanical and biological treatment (MBT) plant at Frog Island. Given that this borough, along with the East London Waste Authority partners, have paid for this facility what benefit will we derive from this arrangement?

Answer:

Household waste tonnages have reduced across the East London Waste Authority (ELWA) region, resulting in there being excess processing capacity at the Mechanical and Biological Treatment Facilities. ELWAs Integrated Waste Management Contract allows the operator, Shanks, to seek commercial/non contract waste to fill any spare capacity and to pay ELWA a royalty amount in respect of each additional non-ELWA tonne of waste processed.

ELWA officers are currently in negotiations with Shanks to ensure the best financial outcome for ELWA from the Shanks/Bedford arrangement. These negotiations are confidential because they are commercially sensitive.

Any additional income received by ELWA as a result of these negotiations will be reflected in future levy calculations and payments made by the Boroughs.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that Members would be advised in due of the income generated by this use of spare capacity and the effect of that on the borough's payments to ELWA.

4 USE OF ALLOTMENT LAND

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor David Durant

Allotments are a popular and genuine green idea that should be promoted by the Council.

Therefore will the Administration promise not to appropriate for planning purposes any allotment land, before a full audit of allotment usage and waiting lists is carried out to ensure all registered allotment land throughout Havering is being fully utilised?

Answer:

The Administration believes that allotment gardening is important to society for three main reasons - other than the obvious one of it being a great source of pleasure and enjoyment for many people.

We believe it is important to the health and wellbeing of Havering residents, providing another way for people to get exercise but also, importantly, being an excellent source of fresh fruit and vegetables, which are so important to good health. As a result allotment gardening contributes strongly to the preventative strands of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, particularly those relating to obesity, physical activity and diet-related illness.

We believe it is important to the green character of, and nature conservation in, the borough, and work with allotment societies has played a part in gaining the impressive nature conservation results in Havering which were reported at the last Council meeting. Specifically, we have worked with the borough's allotment societies to promote the use of sustainable means of pest control, promote species habitats, and with societies and Essex Beekeepers to identify sites for hives, which both help with the pollination of crops and help to conserve bee species.

Finally, we believe that the strength of the allotment societies in the borough is a central part of a strong community infrastructure and voluntary sector, with all the social benefits which flow from this.

For these reasons we have always promoted allotment gardening, in partnership with all the borough's allotment societies and other community groups, and as a result of this allotment gardening is thriving in Havering.

Working together with allotment societies we regularly audit allotment usage and waiting lists through an annual survey of site stewards, the results of which are reported to the Allotment Liaison Group, involving the local authority and all societies, which I chair. Working together, we use the results of the audits to plan increases in allotment provision and capital spend in a strategic way.

As a result of these audits and our shared strategic approach with societies, we have been able to create over 500 extra allotment places throughout Havering since 2008. Among others these include;

- 8 more places at Archibald Road.
- 29 at Ashvale Gardens.
- 44 at Bretons Farm.
- 11 at Chase Cross.
- 17 at Chelmsford Avenue.
- 10 at Dunningford.
- 33 at Grey Towers (North).
- 22 at Grey Towers (South).
- 20 at Havering Grange.
- 12 at Heath Park.
- 35 at Keats Avenue.
- 10 at MacDonald Avenue.
- 6 at Macon Way.
- 14 at Maylands.
- 6 at Melville Road.

- 5 at Mungo Park.
- 18 at Norfolk Road.
- 172 at Pretoria Road.
- 3 at Robin Close.
- 8 at Sowrey Avenue.
- 16 at Stewart Avenue.
- 2 at Uphaving Terrace.

The gap between the number of plots currently vacant in the borough and the number of people on the waiting list is 39 people. We propose to provide for more than half of these places by creating 20 extra plots at Melville Road, even though the waiting list there is only 4 people. We recognise, however, that people from the north or middle of the borough may not find spaces in the south of the borough convenient or accessible, and so we will continue to work with allotment societies to seek ways of providing extra allotment places in all communities across the borough.

Since 2007 an extra £225,000 has been invested in Havering allotments by the Council, a sum often added to by the borough's excellent allotment societies. This has funded the provision of toilets at sites, and other improvements including fencing and paths. The number of active sites in the borough has been increased from 26 to 27.

Allotment gardening, allotment societies, and the relationship between societies and the Council are all thriving in Havering, something which marks Havering out from other boroughs, and I am glad that we are continuing to improve and expand allotment provision.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member emphasised that the Council had adopted a "green" approach to its strategic operations.

5 **WYKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Last month there was an article in the Romford Recorder about changes in facilities at Wykeham Primary School provided by the Cabinet Member. Two weeks later there was a letter from the Head Teacher at the school in the same newspaper contradicting the information. Would the Cabinet Member confirm who is correct?

Answer:

The article in the Romford recorder on 28 Sept 2012, 'Rooms to be Converted...', referred to the Council's plans for meeting the pressing need to provide additional primary places at a large number of schools by bringing former general teaching class rooms back into use, as well as by providing additional accommodation where the need could be clearly demonstrated. In many cases these would be class rooms that had been converted into libraries and ICT bases at the time primary school rolls were falling.

The Head of Wykeham Primary, Mahrukh Katpitia-Mistry, wrote to the Recorder (12 Oct 2012) because she felt the article failed to give an accurate impression of the work Wykeham were doing to improve their facilities. The school were not closing IT centres, art rooms or libraries and the Head wanted to clarify to parents that these facilities were not being taken away – all the facilities needed would still be provided.

Both the article and letter from the Head of Wykeham were correct and as the Head indicated in her letter:

“We have exciting plans for the development of our primary school which includes developing new facilities for our older years and I am looking forward to teaching the borough's children in a school well equipped for the future.”

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member declined to comment on the questioner's lack of direct response from the school but reiterated that the Council and the school were agreed on the way forward.

6 ST HELEN'S COURT, RAINHAM

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)(answered in Councillor Kelly's absence by Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor David Durant

The approach road to St Helen's Court, off Upminster Road South, Rainham is an un-adopted road. As a result the road is used for commuter parking.

Now that St Helen's Court, formerly managed by Homes in Havering, is under direct council control, can this approach road be adopted by the Council and parking restrictions introduced to remove commuter parking to assist Rainham Village Conservation Area and shopping centre?

Answer:

This is one of many requests we have received to carry out works to control parking and improve road facilities for residents. The fact that Homes in Havering have been brought in house makes no difference to the process of deciding whether to adopt a road or not, or to install one type of parking system or another. The issues are ones of process, cost and priority.

In principle, the road can be adopted as public highway, but it would require a check that the Council is the land owner for all areas proposed for adoption, otherwise other landowners would also need to be party the proposal which complicates the process to a certain extent.

The areas proposed for adoption would need to be brought up to a standard which does not create excessive and unreasonable burden on Streetcare's maintenance budget and from a cursory look at the road it is apparent that the carriageway and footway are likely to require repairs, the street lighting would need to be upgraded and we would need to look at the condition and status of surface water drainage and gullies.

We would also need to look at the pedestrian routes in the road. There is pedestrian guardrail placed everywhere very close to the footway edge which potentially gives us a risk in terms of vehicle damage and claims therein as the recognised set back is greater for a highway. Additionally, all footway dropped kerbs would need to be upgraded to be flush and with the requisite tactile paving.

A parking scheme could be proposed during the process and ideally agreed to coincide with adoption, but this would need to be funded, designed, consulted and reported through the Highways Advisory Committee process. In addition, a similar process would be required to impose the local 20mph speed limit on the road.

On the subject of investment in either the road or parking scheme, the Homes and Housing Service have received a number of requests for parking schemes, and are currently identifying all

the areas where parking is a problem, and to develop an overall plan for prioritised investment in parking schemes to address problems of commuter parking, and the mismatch between car ownership and car parking space.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member stated that, although the length of road in question might be short, the amount of work required to bring it up to adoption standard would be likely to cost considerable sums of money and there was no guarantee that the private land owners affected would be willing to co-operate in such an exercise.

7 HORNCHURCH POLICE STATION

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoff Starns)

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

Would the Chairman of the Crime & Disorder Committee please set out what representations he has made to ensure that Hornchurch Police Station remains open?

Answer:

The Council has made initial enquiries regarding the review of assets being undertaken by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the potential closure of Hornchurch Police Station as a result of this.

We are informed that the Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime (MOPAC) estate contains over 800 buildings many of which, including some police stations, are considered as providing poor working conditions for staff, and as being inefficient for modern day policing and these are being replaced by more modern, efficient and geographically responsive facilities.

The MPS is currently reviewing the whole of its property estate to ensure that best use is being made of it and to identify efficiency savings that can be reinvested into operational policing.

As part of this the MPS are looking at Hornchurch police station and what facilities will be needed in the future to meet operational policing requirements in the borough.

To date, no proposals for this building have been put to the MOPAC, but this could provide an opportunity to improve the estate at the same time as delivering substantial savings that will allow the MPS to protect operational capability.

No decision is likely to be made by the MOPAC until later this year. In accordance with the sale of previous buildings in the borough, it is anticipated that the Metropolitan Police will provide the necessary communication with the community at the appropriate time.

We have requested further information on any firm proposal to close Hornchurch Police Station so that we can then give a considered response.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member reiterated that, while the police were looking at improving their operational arrangements and that representations were being made on behalf of the Council as opportunity arose to them about the impact of police station closures.

8 **SALE OF ELECTORAL ROLL INFORMATION**

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoff Starns)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much income the Council has received over each of the last three years by selling personal details from the electoral roll to individuals and organisations?

Answer:

The Electoral Registration Officer has no say in whether the Electoral Register is sold or not as the supply and sale of the Electoral Register is strictly controlled by the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001.

Since 2002 persons have been able to opt out of the 'Edited Register' which is the version of the Register which may be supplied to anyone and may be used for any purpose including commercial and marketing purposes.

The 'Full' version of the Register may only be sold to government departments and other bodies and credit reference agencies and their usage is severely restricted in the Regulations.

The Regulations also specify the price both Registers must be sold for which has not been altered since 2001.

Details of the sales of both Registers for the last three years, by Havering, are given below:-

2009 Register

Full Register Sales – Equifax (£508.00p) ; Experian (£486.50p); Call Credit (£486.50p); Crediva (£486.50p); and Aristotle (£293.00p) bought a copy of the whole Borough; i_CD publishing (£113.00p) bought a copy of the Hornchurch Constituency.

Edited Register Sales - The Hair Exchange (£74.00p) bought a copy of the Hornchurch Constituency; Searchlight (£174.50p); and Bell Pottinger Public Affairs (£174.50p) bought a copy of the whole Borough and the Church of the English Martyrs (£78.50p) bought a copy of several Wards.

2010 Register

Full Register Sales - Experian, Equifax, Callcredit and Crediva: whole register plus monthly updates (£489.50), Aristotle: whole register only (£296).

Edited Register Sales - JBSM Driving School, Romford only (£33)
Individual Hornchurch & Upminster, Dagenham & Rainham, (£113)

2011 Register

Full Register Sales - Experian, Callcredit and Crediva: whole register plus monthly updates (£489.50) Equifax: whole register plus monthly updates and overseas (£505)
Aristotle: whole register only (£299)

Edited Register Sales - Coast Insurance, polling district HT2 (£23)

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member stated that the cost of the details sold varied according to the specific sections requested by the purchaser.

9 USE OF BED & BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how many families are being housed by this council in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and how many of these have been there for over six weeks?

Answer:

The Housing Service is not currently housing any families or single people in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The Housing Service only uses B&B accommodation on the extremely rare occasions that the Council's hostels are full. This most recently occurred earlier this year when Abercrombie House was being completely refurbished and four or five rooms were consequently out of action at any one time. Even then, only eight households had to spend some time in a B&B, with the average stay being three nights. The maximum one of these families stayed in a B&B was six nights.

Children's Services have duties towards parents and children who have no recourse to public funds while they await Home Office decisions, such households could not be assisted by the Housing Service. Such households are placed in B&Bs. There are currently two lone mothers, each with a child, accommodated in B&Bs. One of these has been in the B&B for more than six weeks.

10 PROCESSING OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

In respect of planning applications and appeals, over the past three years would the Cabinet Member set out:

- a) How many planning applications have been submitted?
- b) How many appeals have been lodged?
- c) The number of refused applications that went to appeal?
- d) How many appeals the council lost?
- e) The cost of the lost appeals to the council?

Answer:

- a) Planning Applications Submitted

2009/10 – 1715

2010/11 – 1869

2011/12 – 1822

2012/13 (year to date) – 953

b) & c) Appeals are most commonly lodged against refusal, with very few, if any, each year being appeals against non-determination (figure given in brackets)

2009/10 - 79 (0)

2010/11 – 51 (0)

2011/12 – 52 (2)

2012/13 (year to date) – 48 (0)

d) Appeals Allowed or Part-Allowed

2009/10 – 25 (32%)

2010/11 – 12 (24%)

2011/12 – 15 (29%)

2012/13 (year to date) – 12 (25%)

e) No separate data is held on the costs associated with appeals – such costs are absorbed within the overall cost of the Planning Service.

11 LIBRARY USERS - NUMBERS

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

Would the Cabinet Member advise the number of registered library users in each of the last three years and how this is monitored?

Answer:

A registered library user is someone who has a library card. When a resident joins Havering Library Service this is recorded by the Libraries Management computer system and the ongoing figures are monitored by the Library Services Manager and Libraries Management Team for action as appropriate.

In the seven months that we have figures for so far in 2012, 158, 375 people are members of Havering Library Service. This is 69% of the local population, making the Library Service easily the most popular service of choice which the local authority offers. This is already two thousand more than the figure for the whole of 2011/12, when 156,533 people were members. In 2010/11 there were 167,712 members.

These figures do not include those who the Library service work with in schools, academies and playgroups, leading the development of literacy and reading among children, young people and families. Nor do they include work with groups for whom reading has particular health and social benefits, such as MIND, the Mental Health Forum, Robert Beard Disability Group and the Queen's Hospital. The Reader Development Team made 1,628 such visits last year.

Figures for library issues are included in the Members' performance Pack, and showed an increase in the last quarter. In addition to this there have been just under 290,000 visits to the Havering virtual online library so far this year.

12 **AIDS FOR THE DISABLED****To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)**

By Councillor June Alexander

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how many requests for aids in the home for disabled people have been received by the Council in each of the past four years and how many of these were agreed, what were the budgets and what was the expenditure?

Answer:

We currently have the following information on the number of Aids and Adaptations agreed for the last two years, (2011/12 and 2010/11).

Items of Aid and Adaptation agreed, budget and expenditure

Year	2011/12	2010/11
Number Agreed	6036	4518
Budget	£1,026,510	£1,137,090
Expenditure	£1,020,253	£1,006,788

However to obtain the information for the years 2009/10 and 2008/09 would require significant officer time. Officers will provide this information and forward to Councillor Alexander at a later date.

13 **SALE OF DUNNINGFORD SCHOOL SITE – CAPITAL RECEIPT****To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)**

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

Would the Cabinet Member set out what capital receipt was received for the sale of the Dunningford School site in Elm Park and what will this sum be used for?

Answer:

£9,699,057 was the sale price for Dunningford. The Council does not ring fence any capital receipts. All proceeds from disposals are accumulated together to finance the Council's capital programme, which is approved by Council as part of the annual budget setting process. However the programme to create two new primary schools proceeded on the basis that the proceeds of Dunningford and other sites vacated would enable the Council to build two new schools. To date the building costs stand at £8.9m in respect of Hylands Primary and £8m re Elm Park Primary. Spend was incurred before the receipts were realised thus it was necessary to utilise other sources of funding in order to manage the cash flow.

14 ENFORCEMENT OF PAVEMENT PARKING CONTROLS WHERE MARKINGS HAVE BEEN OBLITERATED

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Linda Van den Hende

Would the Cabinet Member explain what the rule is, in enforcement terms, where white lines on pavements which permit parking have been partially covered due to footway patching making the designated area incomplete?

Answer:

If the circumstances as described have taken place, then the restriction still applies in that motorists are required to park within a footway parking bay markings. However, the Civil Enforcement Team will make a judgement in each circumstance as to whether the condition or potential obstruction of the restriction or parking bay would lead to a motorist to be unsure of the restriction etc. and therefore be directly the reason why a vehicle has been parked in contravention.

15 RECOVERY OF LOSSES FROM ICELANDIC BANKS

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ron Ower

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much we have recovered to date from the £12.5 million invested in Icelandic Banks?

Answer:

The recovery process for the money held with Icelandic banks is still ongoing. To date we have received just over £7m.

16 ASH TREES: DIEBACK DISEASE

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns and Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

In view of the dieback disease which is now affecting our native Ash trees, what measures have been taken to check our trees are fungus free, as the advice which has been circulated is that any affected trees should be felled and burnt as soon as the disease is detected?

Answer:

The Parks Team, Parks Grounds Maintenance and Highway Tree Team are currently surveying the Ash Trees in the borough. Officers will take advice from the Forestry Commission should the disease be found.

17 **PROCEEDS OF MAYOR'S CHARITABLE APPEALS**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ron Ower

The Mayors' Charities always provide an excellent focus for raising funds for worthy causes. Would the Cabinet Member set out how much has been raised in each year since 2002?

Answer:

When funds are donated in response to a mayoral appeal payment these may in some cases be made directly to the nominated charity rather than through the Council. Payments made to the Council are processed through the "The Mayor of Havering General Appeal Fund". In accordance with the relevant regulations records are kept for a set period and for each financial year as opposed to each mayoral year. It is therefore not feasible to give a full account of funds raised in each mayoral year or for the period requested. However efforts of our mayors in promoting worthy local causes deserve the support of all members.

<i>DIVISION NUMBER:</i>	1	2	3	4			
The Mayor [Cllr. Lynden Thorpe]	O	O	O	O			
The Deputy Mayor [Cllr. Eric Munday]	O	✓	✓	✓			
<u>CONSERVATIVE GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Michael White	✓	✓	ID	✓			
Cllr. Michael Armstrong	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Robert Benham	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Becky Bennett	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Sandra Binion	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Jeff Brace	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Wendy Brice-Thompson	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Dennis Bull	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Andrew Curtin	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Osman Dervish	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Ted Eden	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Roger Evans	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Georgina Galpin	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Peter Gardner	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Lesley Kelly	A	A	A	A			
Cllr. Steven Kelly	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Pam Light	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Robby Misir	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Barry Oddy	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Frederick Osborne	A	A	A	A			
Cllr. Gary Pain	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Roger Ramsey	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Paul Rochford	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Geoffrey Starns	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Billy Taylor	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Barry Tebbutt	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Frederick Thompson	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Linda Trew	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Melvin Wallace	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Keith Wells	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cllr. Damian White	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<u>RESIDENTS' GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Clarence Barrett	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. June Alexander	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Nic Dodin	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Brian Eagling	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Gillian Ford	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Linda Hawthorn	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Barbara Matthews	✓	O	X	✓			
Cllr. Ray Morgon	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. John Mylod	A	A	A	A			
Cllr. Ron Ower	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. Linda Van den Hende	✓	✓	X	✓			
Cllr. John Wood	✓	✓	X	✓			
<u>LABOUR GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Keith Darvill	✓	✓	X	X			
Cllr. Denis Breading	✓	✓	X	X			
Cllr. Paul McGeary	✓	✓	X	X			
Cllr. Pat Murray	✓	✓	X	X			
Cllr. Denis O'Flynn	✓	✓	X	X			
<u>INDEPENDENT LOCAL RESIDENTS' GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Jeffery Tucker	O	O	X	O			
Cllr. Michael Deon Burton	A	A	A	A			
Cllr. David Durant	O	O	X	O			
Cllr. Mark Logan	O	O	X	O			
TOTALS							
✓ = YES	45	45	29	41			
X = NO	0	0	19	5			
O = ABSTAIN/NO VOTE	5	5	1	4			
ID = DECLARATION OF INTEREST/NO VOTE	0	0	1	0			
A = ABSENT FROM MEETING	4	4	4	4			
	54	54	54	54			

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REPORT OF CABINET

THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Cabinet noted that over the course of the previous two years, the Council had agreed a package of savings to mitigate the impact of very significant cuts in central government funding to local authorities. Government plans for radical changes to a number of areas had been announced over this period, with more detail gradually emerging. These changes would fundamentally alter the way in which local authorities were funded, the details of which had been reported to Cabinet previously.

Cabinet noted the update on recent developments since a similar report was considered in November 2012. Updates on the following areas were detailed in the report before Cabinet:

- Localisation of business rates
- Localisation of Council Tax support
- School Funding & Pupil Referral Units
- Capital funding.

Cabinet also considered the position in the current financial year, and other relevant issues, as these need to be taken into account in developing the detailed budget for 2013/14.

Reasons for the decision:

It was essential that the Council's financial strategy took due account of Government plans, and any other material factors where these were likely to have an impact on the Council's financial position. The report provided an update to Cabinet on issues relevant to the budget setting process.

Other options considered:

None. The Constitution required this as a step towards setting the Council's budget.

Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that it approves the revenue and capital strategy statement, as set out in Appendix A to this report.

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REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY

The Council will ensure that there is an effective Medium Term Financial Strategy in place to drive forward the financial planning process and resource allocation. The financial strategy will be determined by policies and priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, together with other key Strategies, and with appropriate linkages in place to the Service Planning process.

The Council is clear about, and remains committed to, its *Living Ambition*, the long-term vision for the future of the borough, which is to provide Havering's residents with the highest possible quality of life, in a borough that thrives on its links to the heart of the capital, without ever losing the natural environment, historic identity and local way of life that makes Havering unique.

Underpinning the *Living Ambition* are five key goals: Environment, Learning, Towns and Communities, Individuals and Value, with a number of strategic objectives under each Goal. The Council is committed to allocating resources in a way that will support the achievement of these objectives.

The Council recognises the pressures on its budget, and while seeking to protect and enhance front-line services as far as possible, will aim to contain these pressures within existing resources. Cabinet Members will examine all budget pressures and seek reductions where possible.

The Council will wherever possible seek new funding and new ways of working. The Council will continue to look at new methods of service delivery to improve services to the public and the value for money that they provide, including working in partnership with others.

The Council will continue to seek to improve efficiency and deliver value for money, in particular, the Council will aim to identify efficiencies that will not impact on service delivery, and to identify options that will improve the value for money of its services through improving performance, and/or reducing service costs.

The Council will ensure that, given the severe financial pressures it is facing, growth will only be supported in priority areas, or where the Council is required to fund new responsibilities.

The Council will however ensure that the most vulnerable members of its community are protected, will continue to lead in the development of social cohesion, and will ensure that the services provided and resources allocated reflect the diverse nature and needs of our local community and our responsibilities to the local environment.

The Council will lobby to ensure that the Government provides adequate funding to take on any new responsibilities and to illustrate the impact of the low funding basis for Havering and its residents, but will ensure that, in broad terms, its spending is in line with the basis on which the Government allocates grant funding, and that spending levels will be realigned against any reductions in funding.

The Council will ensure that it engages with its local community, its partners and individual stakeholders in developing financial plans, and will reflect on the outcome of its consultation process in the identification of priorities and the allocation of resources.

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That, while addressing its priorities and setting a balanced and prudent budget, the Council will seek to keep any increase in the Council Tax to the lowest possible level and in line with its stated aspirations whilst maintaining reserves at the minimum level of £10m.

And as part of that process, the Council will not utilise those reserves, or any reserves earmarked for specified purposes, to subsidise its budget and reduce Council Tax levels as this is neither a sustainable nor a robust approach.

The Council will seek to ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to enable it to deliver a long-term savings plan within the constraints of funding available to it from both local taxpayers and the Government, and will seek to utilise any unallocated funds with that purpose in mind.

The Council will adopt a prudent capital programme designed to maintain and where possible enhance its assets, in line with the Living Ambition.

The Council will finance capital expenditure through a combination of external funding and capital and Section 106 receipts, and will only apply prudential borrowing as a last resort, unless a business case can be made to finance investment through borrowing, where there is an income or savings stream arising from the investment.

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CAPITAL BUDGET STRATEGY

The capital budget strategy sets out the Council's approach to capital investment over the medium term. It has been developed in consultation between senior officers, Members and the Council's key strategic partners and is integrated with Havering's *Living Ambition*, set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Council will ensure it engages with the local community and wider stakeholders in developing its financial plans.

The Council has adopted a prudent capital programme in line with the *Living Ambition* designed to:

- protect, maintain and develop existing assets and infrastructure – the backlog of repairs to existing assets such as school buildings, office accommodation, and infrastructure assets such as roads and paths;
- develop new facilities for which there is significant public demand or upgrading assets to meet the expectations of local people, and obtaining value for money from the use of our assets and resources;
- support the delivery of the Council's transformation programme and further initiatives to improve efficiency and effectiveness e.g. through the adoption of new technology to release revenue savings or improve service delivery to the community.

The Council will seek to continue to improve efficiency and value for money, in particular to:

- maximise asset utilisation;
- ensure assets are fit for purpose and health and safety compliant;
- facilitate and promote community use;
- explore alternative management arrangements e.g. leases to community groups;
- explore opportunities for innovative ways to procure and deliver capital projects to maximise the resources available;
- consider the wider aspects of capital projects, for example whole life asset costs, equality and diversity, and environmental implications;
- investigate shared usage/ownership arrangement with other local authorities, partners and stakeholders.

As well as the above, the Council's approach to capital asset management includes the review of existing assets in terms of suitability for purpose, alternative and future use, and maintenance requirements. The aim for the Council to rationalise its asset portfolio and only hold assets that support the delivery of its goals, offer value for money or in some other way are important for community, heritage or other significant social purpose.

The capital budget strategy is intrinsically linked to the revenue budget strategy. The revenue implications of capital expenditure and funding decisions are explored and accounted for on an ongoing basis. These are reflected as appropriate and include the consideration of the challenging financial climate which the Council faces.

The Council will finance capital expenditure through a combination of:

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- Receipts
- External Funding
- S106 Contributions
- Revenue Contributions to Capital
- Capital Grants
- Capital Allowances
- Supported Borrowing
- Prudential Borrowing.

Each funding stream is considered in terms of risk and affordability in the short and longer term.

The current and future economic climates have a significant influence on capital funding decisions. As a result planned disposals are kept under regular review to ensure the timing maximises the potential receipt where market conditions are not favourable.

Capital expenditure will only be permitted where funding streams have been identified and confirmed. Prudential borrowing will only be used as a last resort, unless a business case can be made to finance the investment from an income or savings stream.

Every effort is made to maximise grant funding, leverage opportunities and other external funding opportunities, where they are consistent with the Council's *Living Ambition* vision, goals and strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. Use of grant funding will however only be made where the cost to the Council is minimised or where this – both capital and revenue – can be contained within existing resources.

Where expenditure is to be financed through capital, this will only occur where funds have been realised. Neither capital receipts generated through disposals nor S106 contributions are committed until they are actually received. This is due to the complex conditions and timing issues that can be associated with them.

The Council is also continuing to attract private investment into Council facilities through exploration of potential partnership and outsourcing arrangements.

This funding approach has been made with reference to the Council's current and longer term financial position, the prudential code, the current and projected economic climate, and the Council's asset management strategy as set out in the Corporate Asset Management Plan.

The capital programme will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will consider items such as new funding opportunities and Member priorities. In year changes e.g. the availability of additional external funding, will be made on an ongoing basis as part of routine programme management. These will be implemented with regard to the Council's Constitution and agreed procedures.

REPORT OF THE CABINET

LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX

The Cabinet was advised that Local Authorities had been challenged to devise and implement a local council tax support scheme within a limited period that would also meet a 10% reduction in Government expenditure. For Havering, this was a financial pressure of £1.9 million which had been found primarily from the proposed council tax reforms and the new parameters for the local council tax support scheme.

The report and appendices summarised the proposed changes to discounts and exemptions arising from the council tax reforms and Havering's draft local council tax support scheme. Details of the formal consultation with residents, persons affected and the Greater London Authority (GLA) were contained within the report. The Cabinet Member expressed his thanks to those members of the public who had submitted responses to the consultation.

It was noted that the Government had offered local authorities a share of £100 million to assist the transition from council tax benefit to local council tax support, the details of which were also set out in the report.

In addition, the position with regard to funding the implementation and administration of the draft local scheme and the implications for council tax collection were noted.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that

1. The proposed local council tax support scheme as set out in Appendices A & E of the report be adopted.
2. The proposals to vary the discounts in respect of certain classes of empty dwellings as summarised in Appendix A of the report be adopted.
3. The responses to consultation on council tax support and the council tax technical reforms be noted.
4. The financial pressure of a £1.9 million reduction in government grant for council tax support in 2013/14 be noted.
5. The content of the transitional grant scheme be noted and the band D restriction to local council tax support be deferred to April 2014.
6. The delegation of responsibility to make any minor and consequential changes necessary to the detailed provision as a result of any changes to the draft regulations upon which the scheme is based to the Director

of Finance & Commerce and the Portfolio Lead Member, be approved so far as the Council is concerned.

Note: Relevant appendices from the report to Cabinet, updated with additional information that became available subsequent to the Cabinet meeting, are attached to this report.



Final Option for Local Council Tax Support

Impacts working age claimants and people with second homes

Final Option	
<p>From April 2013, increase non-dependant deductions from: £0.00 to £0.00* £3.30 to £6.00 £6.55 to £9.00 £8.25 to £15.00 £9.90 to £20.00</p> <p>Increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013 as follows: Remove the second homes discount completely (currently 10%). Remove Class A exemption (empty and undergoing major structural repairs). Remove the Class C exemption (unoccupied and unfurnished) completely. Take the savings from the abolition of Class L (mortgagees in possession).</p> <p>From April 2014, the maximum council tax support award will be capped to the top of band D, which is currently £28.80 per week.</p>	
2013 Reduction: £1.8 mil	2013 Contingency: NIL

*Under the current benefit rules, non-dependant deductions are based on the gross income of the non-dependant. However, where the non-dependant is in receipt of an out-of-work benefit, the deduction remains at zero in line with the current scheme.

For 2013/14, this option uses a combination of increased non-dependant deductions and reductions in property exemptions.

For 2014/15, the CTS scheme will use a combination of increased non-dependant deductions, reductions in property exemptions and capping weekly council tax support to a band D charge which is currently £28.80.

The non-dependant deductions above have been calculated using 2012/13 rates. The DWP will provide 2013/14 non-dependant deduction rates in December 2012 from which savings can be calculated.

Potentially 582 claimants residing in properties banded E, F, G and H could be affected by restricting benefit to Band D Claimants. Further analysis will continue to determine more exactly the numbers affected.

This option comprising elements of benefits and council tax to make the savings could affect 8,296 households of which 715 will be in receipt of benefit and 7,581 will be Council Tax Payers with second homes. These are forecasted figures, which will be monitored up until the implementation of the new scheme.

Proposals in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 are optimized above to attain the savings to offset the Government's 10% reduction in expenditure. The proposed scheme for 2013 also takes advantage of the Government's additional transitional funding which is outlined in paragraph five of the report.

Preferred Option Statistical Data

Description	Properties that may be affected by band	No. cases All CTB lost	Annual LA Saving/Customer Loss £	No. of household affected
a. Increase Non dependant deductions: £3.30 to £6.00 £6.55 to £9.00 £8.25 to £15.00 £9.90 to £20.00	715 cases affected	94	£185k	715
From 2014 b. Restriction to Actual Band D Liability 2012/13 £28.80	Working Age: Band A - 0 Band B - 0 Band C - 0 Band D - 0 Band E - 454 Band F - 87 Band G - 20 Band H - 1	None	Total £89k A £0.00 B £0.00 C £0.00 D £0.00 E £45k F £32k G £11k H £1k	582
Exemption Category	Current scheme	LGFA Enables	Potential Additional Income £	No. of properties affected
c. Second homes	Having apply a Discretionary discount of 10%.	Range of discretion between 0% and 50%. Having propose 0%.	47K	739
d. Exemption Class A – empty and undergoing major repairs/structural alterations	100% up to a maximum of 12 months	Discretionary discount between 0% and 100%. Having propose 0% over 12 months.	240k	468
e. Exemption Class C – unoccupied and unfurnished	100% up to a maximum of 6 months	Discretionary discount between 0% and 100%. Having propose 0%.	1.303k	6289
f. Mortgagees in possession Class L	100% no time limit	Abolition. Having propose 0% from a date to be confirmed by DCLG.	41k	85
Total			1.816k	8,296

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1. Reason for consultation
2. Consultation process
3. Consultation Methodology and Details of the Consultation Process
4. Summary of outcomes
5. The questions
6. Responses to each question
7. Comments

1. Reason for consultation

- 1.1 At the 2010 Spending Review, the Government announced that it would localise support for council tax (CTS) from 2013 and that expenditure allocated to CTS would be reduced by 10% compared to council tax benefit expenditure.
- 1.2 As part of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, the national Council Tax Benefit scheme (CTB) will be abolished from April 2013. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) under the Local Government Finance Act have proposed local schemes to support residents with their council tax to be administered by local authorities.
- 1.3 The Local Government Finance Act also enables the technical Council Tax Reforms allowing billing authorities to vary the level of certain discounts and exemptions.
- 1.4 Schedule 4 of the Local Government Finance Act requires local authorities to consult on their local Council Tax Support scheme. The purpose of the consultation is to:
 - Ensure all our residents and other interested parties have the opportunity to have their say on these important changes
 - Consult on the Council's proposals for the Council Tax Technical Reforms and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.
 - Take account of residents' and representatives' views in the development of the final scheme.
 - Gather suggestions and identify issues that need to be addressed in the new scheme.

2. Consultation process

- 2.1 The individuals, groups and organisations consulted included:

- Councillors
- Council Tax payers
- Benefit recipients
- General public
- Greater London Authority
- Advice providers
- Community groups
- Customers at the PASC
- Social rented sector landlords
- Private sector landlords
- Staff, including former staff

3. Consultation Methodology and Details of the Consultation Process

- Advised GLA of options and consultation methodology
- All consultation documents and related information were available on the Council's website
- An online questionnaire was on the Council's website
- All consultation documents and related information (including posters and paper copies of the questionnaires) were available from main customer access points, including:
 - All libraries
 - MyPlace Community Centre
 - Homes In Havering
 - Central Park Leisure Centre
 - Briar Road Information Shop
 - Public Advice and Service Centre
 - Romford Town Hall
 - Havering Visitor Centre
 - Queens Hospital
 - Hornchurch Leisure Centre
 - Registration Services
 - Fairkytes Art Centre
 - Queens Theatre
 - Medical Centre
 - Rainham Health Centre
- Focus groups with members of the public, advice providers and community groups, Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services staff, social rented sector landlords and private sector landlords
- The home page of Havering's website included a banner link to the online survey
- An article and a link to the online survey in Inside Havering
- Information and a link to the online survey in two editions of the internal global email
- Information and a link to the online survey in an email to 3,000 residents
- A message and a link to the online survey included on payslips to existing staff (including schools and academies) and to Havering pensioners

- Paper copies of the survey and information about the proposed changes were included with Council Tax bills and Council Tax Benefit notification letters

4. Summary of outcomes

295 people responded to the questionnaire, of these 130 responded on line and 165 completed the paper questionnaire.

Responses showed an overwhelming support (81%) for the proposed scheme with the exception of one survey question. This was with regard to removal of the major repairs/structural alteration exemption where over half the respondents were not opposed to removing it..

The main findings on the specific questions were:

A high proportion (81%) of respondents agreed that the shortfall should be funded by removing the exemption for second homes.

Almost 80% agreed that people who own or rent more than one property should not be able to claim Council Tax relief.

Respondents were more evenly divided on whether properties undergoing repairs should be eligible for Council Tax relief. 47% agreed that they should be, while 43% said that they should not be eligible.

Over half of those who responded believed that unoccupied and unfurnished properties should not be eligible for Council Tax relief, while almost 36% disagreed.

79% said that banks and building societies should pay Council Tax on properties that they repossess.

70% of respondents said that working age people who receive Council Tax Support and who live in properties banded E to H should not receive more Council Tax Support than those living in properties banded A to D. 132% did not agree and 17% said that they did not know.

70% of respondents agreed that other adults who are working and living in a household where the council tax payer claims Council Tax Support should contribute more towards the Council Tax bill than they do now. 18% disagreed and 12% said that they did not know.

5. The questions

Principle: Local authorities will be expected to manage the 10% reduction in subsidised expenditure.

Question 1. The Council needs to make up a shortfall of £1.9million to meet Government changes to the way it funds council tax. This could be done by reviewing current exemptions from Council tax that currently apply and by changing some of the rules about who qualifies for Council Tax Benefit.

Currently some second homes are exempt from Council Tax, this could be used to fund most of the proposed shortfall rather than by raising the Council Tax on all properties across the borough.

Question 2. Should people who own or rent more than one property be able to claim Council Tax relief from the council?

Question 3. Should properties undergoing repairs be eligible for Council Tax relief?

Question 4. Should unoccupied and unfurnished properties be eligible for council tax relief?

Question 5 Should banks and building societies pay Council Tax on properties they repossess?

Principle: In developing schemes, local authorities should consider incentivising claimants into work.

Question 6. Should working age people who receive Council Tax Support and live in properties banded E to H receive more Council Tax Support than those living in properties banded A to D?

Question 7. Under the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme, other adults such as an adult son, daughter, other relative or friend who lives in the claimant's home are expected to contribute to household bills such as Council Tax.

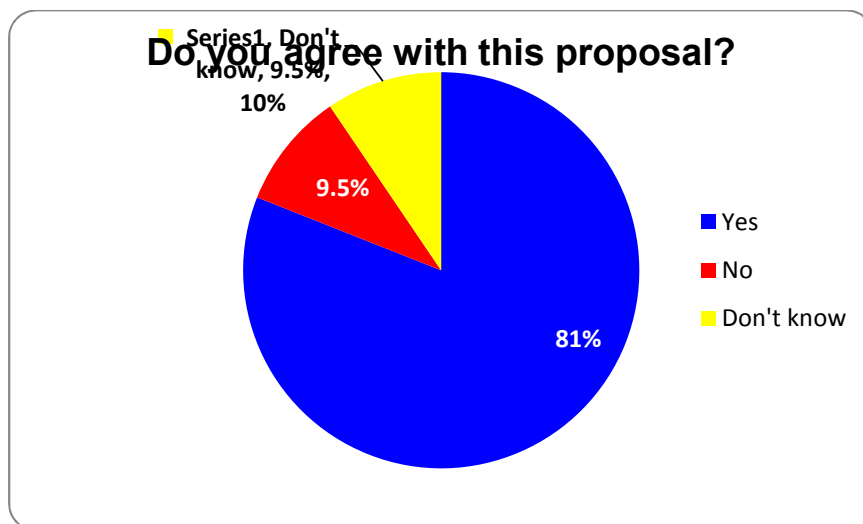
Should these other adults who are working and living in a household where the council tax payer claims Council Tax Support contribute more towards the Council Tax bill than they do now?

6. Responses to each question

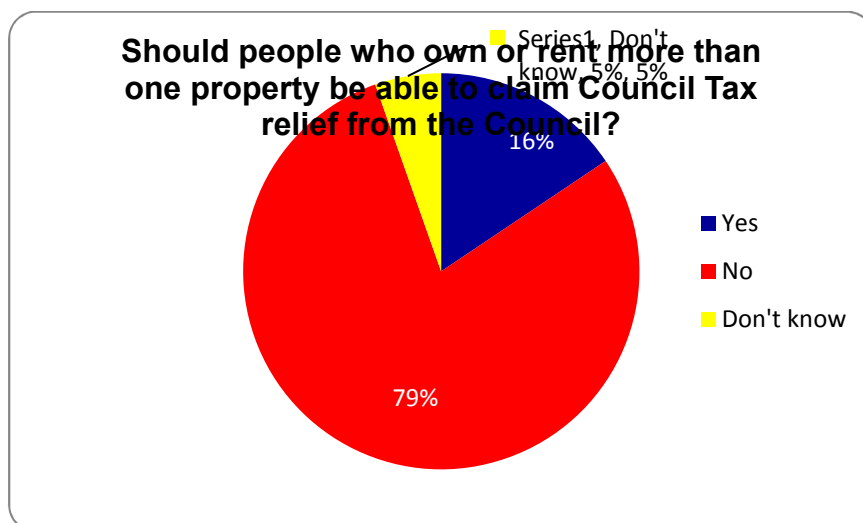
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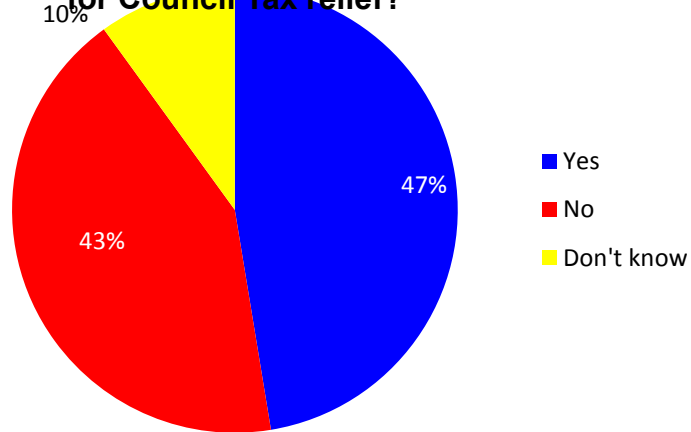


Question 2. Should people who own or rent more than one property be able to claim Council Tax relief from the council?



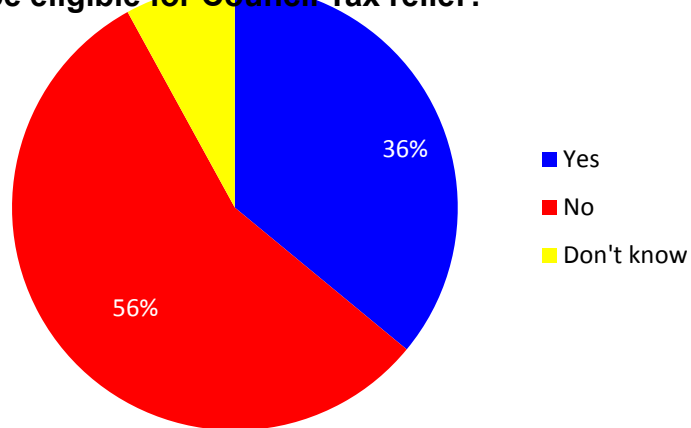
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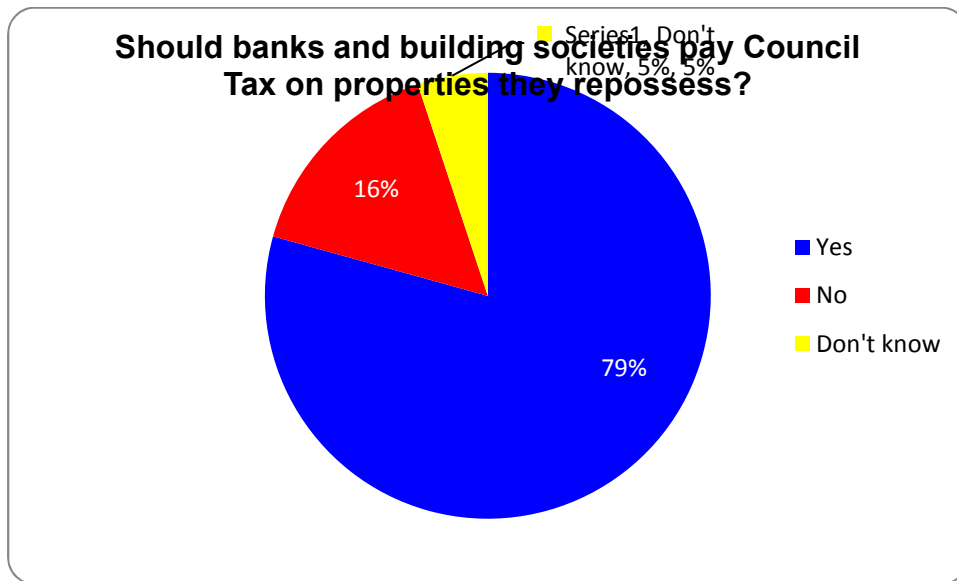


Question 4. Should unoccupied and unfurnished properties be eligible for council tax relief?

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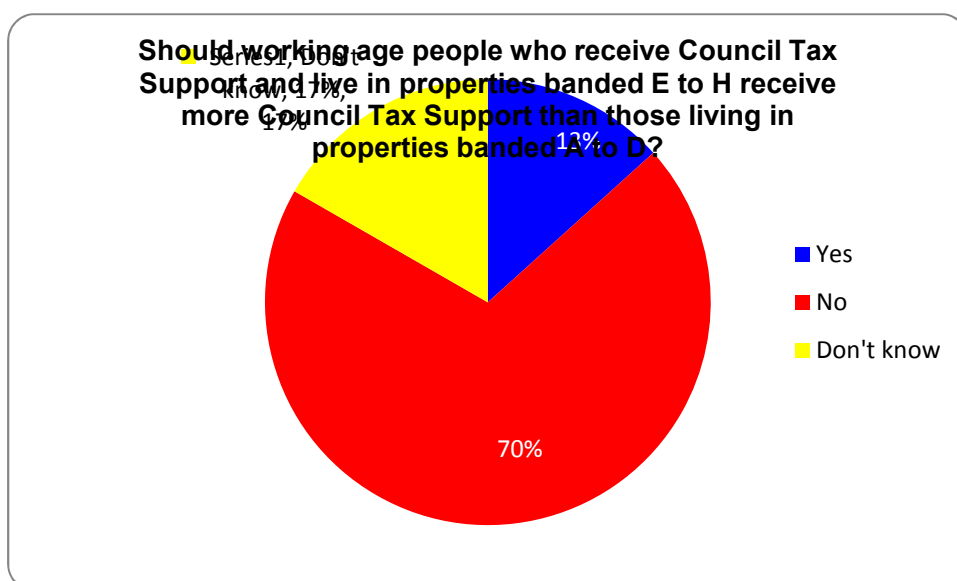


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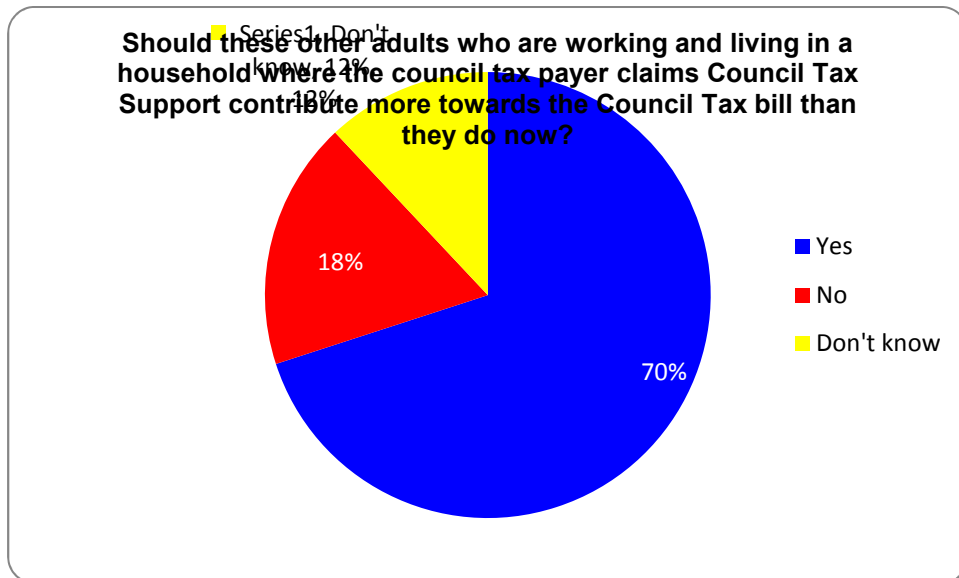
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Should these other adults who are working and living in a household where the council tax payer claims Council Tax Support contribute more towards the Council Tax bill than they do now?



7. Comments

Comments received in response to Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation.

The comments below were received from people completing the online and paper surveys, from those who attended the focus groups, from a resident who was unable to attend the focus group and from the Royal British Legion.

Their comments have been reproduced verbatim.

Questionnaire

295 people responded to the questionnaire, of these 130 responded on line and 165 completed the paper questionnaire.

Focus groups

Focus groups were held with members of the public, advice providers and community groups, Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services staff, social rented sector landlords and private sector landlords.

Although plenty of notice was given, we were disappointed by the small number who attended for some of the groups.

Numbers attending and invited were as follows:

Members of the public – three people attended (3,000 invitations sent)

Advice providers and community groups – 12 people attended (99 invitations sent)

Representatives of the Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services staff – 10 people attended (10 invitations sent)

Social rented sector landlords – one person attended (25 invitations sent)

Private sector landlords – one person attended (40 invitations sent).

Other comments

Comments were also received from a member of the public who was unable to attend the focus group and from the Royal British Legion.

One resident could not attend but asked for the following to be included:

'I will not be able to attend the meeting on the 2nd November and there is only one thing I feel very strongly about in relation to council tax. That is that people with a second home should NOT get a second home discount as the services to each house are the same and should be equally paid for.

I should also mention that all people getting any kind of benefits should have them checked regularly as most people whose circumstances change do not inform the council immediately and some not at all. Thank you for your E-mails and keep up the good work.'

The Royal British Legion wrote in response to the consultation strongly urging the Council to ensure that the local scheme provides a 100% disregard for military compensation payments. The Council has confirmed that the preferred option will disregard these payments in full in the local Council Tax Support scheme.

Principle: Local authorities will be expected to manage the 10% reduction in subsidised expenditure.

Question 1. The Council needs to make up a shortfall of £1.9million to meet Government changes to the way it funds council tax. This could be done by reviewing current exemptions from Council tax that currently apply and by changing some of the rules about who qualifies for Council Tax Benefit.

Currently some second homes are exempt from Council Tax, this could be used to fund most of the proposed shortfall rather than by raising the Council Tax on all properties across the borough.

86 Comments to this Question

- If someone has 2 homes then surely they can afford 2 council taxes.
- council should not burden tax payer anymore
- DOES ANYONE CARE ABOUT OUR COMMENT?
- If 2nd homes can be afforded, then they have enough money to PAY FULL COUNCIL TAX!
- Not fair on residents who don't qualify for t28
- Second homes shouldn't be totally exempt.
- If you can afford 2 homes, you can afford to pay council tax on both.
- We think every house should pay council tax and the rest of us shouldn't pay more council tax.
- There seems no logic giving financial support to anyone who has the financial ability to acquire a second home.
- If you can afford to own a second home you can afford to pay the council tax.
- It would be good idea to propose shortfall rather raising tax.

- Are you kidding? If you can afford to own more than one house, you can afford to pay council tax on all of them.
- These homes get all the services from the borough as those paying council tax.
- If you can afford a second home you can afford the tax on it.
- use them or sell them
- Second homes should not be exempt.
- If you have 2 houses you should pay tax on both.
- If you have a second home pay your bills, please! I'm tired of paying for other people.
- * Council tax are always increased yearly increasing council tax make no differents increase council tax. We arepaying for the olympics coming to london already.
- If people can afford a second property then they can afford full council tax.
- i think they should pay more because if they can afford a second home they should pay more council tax
- If the reason is to find shortfall instead of raising the Council Tax.
- Never understood why you can own two homes yet do not have to pay the same Council Tax per dwelling that residents with one home have to!!!
- It is unfair to charge someone for a service twice.
- None
- This seems the obvious solution with the least impact on people in need.
- Vacant Inherited properties should be exempt from council tax during probate and subsiquent sale proceedings.
- If you can afford a second home you can afford to pay council tax of some sort
- It would be easier to make an informed choice if we knew why 'some' homes are exempt to start with.
- If 2nd home owners can afford a 2nd home then they can afford to pay Council Tax.
- **I do not agree with this statement. The money should be raised by reassessing those on benefit who do not or abuse the system.
- There appears to be no justification for exempting 2nd homes. These are potentially income producing assets.
- Definitely fully support this proposal
- Tax should be paid on Second Property no matter what name its paid-Its Still uses the Councils Services.
- It would seem a fair assumption that anyone in the position of having a SECOND home should be able to comfortably afford the Council Tax on it. Raising the tax on ALL property in unfair. People struggling to afford their one & only home shouldn't have to fund 100% exemption for others.
- Second homes should pay at least a % of Council tax & not completely exempt as implied above (somewhat surprised @ that statement - what second homes are exempt?).
- If you can afford 2 homes you can afford the council tax.
- If you are rich enough to own a second home, then you are rich enough to pay full council tax on it.
- we are a family on 1 income, even though our income is seen as a good income, we feel that we have nothing other than our run down home, due to paying so many taxes, yet I see so many people in receipt of benefits gaining access to things that we could only dream of.
- Most second homes are investment purchases and I believe should always have been subject to full council tax liability.
- If you can afford a second you can afford to pay the council tax
- People who can afford to pay their council tax if they can afford to own more than

one home should pay the council tax that comes with it, they could always rent it out and the tenant pay it for them.

- if people can afford second homes , there can afford to pay the tax on them . there have to pay building insurance why not council tax
- With the shortage of properties that we are experiencing at the moment, people who own or rent more than one property should be made to pay double council tax on the properties which are not their main address home.
- Although this would increase costs for those who are fortunate enough to own a second home, it will help those on low incomes who only have one home to be better able to afford this.
- If they can afford a second home they can afford the tax.
- If a second home is within your means there certainly should be no exemption from council tax.
- If you can afford a second home then you should be able to afford the council tax.
- Why should people with second homes pay less than less than I pay for my home.
- Personally myself on a low income as a lone parent re-entering work with other bills do not see how i will afford it.
- Also possible to exempt them at a rate less than 100% e.g. 20%, 50% etc
- Exemption from Council Tax for second homeowners is a disgrace and morally wrong. It is profiteering and taking advantage of the less well off in society and expecting the public purse to line the pockets of what is a "private enterprise"
- ***Band restriction and non dependant deductions will badly hit larger families in fairly modest properties. I HAVE JUST HAD TO GO BACK THROUGH THIS FORM TO MAKE THIS POINT AS THERE WAS NO OBVIOUS PLACE FOR IT! PLEASE READ. Dear Sir/Madam Re: Council Tax Reduction scheme - protect families with disabled children I am writing to request that you consider families with disabled children as one of your protected groups as you draw up and implement your Council Tax Reduction scheme. I understand that as well as giving local authorities responsibility for a scheme to replace Council Tax Benefit from 2013/14, the Government has reduced the budget for this support by 10 per cent. This means councils face difficult decisions on who to support. I believe that it is vital that local authorities protect families with disabled children as they design their council tax support schemes because they are more likely to be living in poverty compared to others. Additional costs in transport, heating, food, special equipment and clothing means that it costs three-times more to raise a disabled child see table of costs. This is on top of limited employment opportunities due to the demands of combining caring and work although many of us do so against the odds. Contact a Family's Counting the Costs 2012 survey of over 2,300 families with disabled children across the UK shows that for those in jobs one in seven (14 per cent) is missing meals and one in six (17 per cent) cannot afford to heat their homes. For families not in work due to their caring responsibilities almost a quarter (24 per cent) is going without food and a third (32 per cent) without heating. Counting the Costs 2012 also found that in the last 12 months, 31 per cent (up from 15 per cent in 2010), of families with disabled children have fallen behind with payments for Council Tax. Unless families with disabled children are protected in the same way as pensioners, some of the poorest families with disabled children will be face further financial disadvantage and may find that they are obliged to use some of their child's disability living allowance to meet council tax liability rather than their child's extra needs. Like carers of adults, parents of disabled children deserve recognition for the huge contribution they make to the economy by caring - saving the NHS and social services billions each year. Money worries are already putting huge additional emotional and mental strain on parent carers. If family finances are stretched further, sadly the reality is that many parent carers are likely to buckle under the strain. The end result is more costly 'crisis

support' having to be funded by the local council. {If you have personal experiences of caring, please do add them here. Real life examples of caring and the need for financial support and recognition are a powerful way to back up the arguments made in the letter} I understand that local councils are facing difficult decisions about future support but I urge you to take this opportunity to protected families with disabled children in our area.

- People with second homes should pay for council tax on both homes as they are wealthier than people with one home. Why should working class people with one home have thier council tax raised when there are people better off with to homes.
- In my view Council Tax Benefit should go to those who really need it. if you own more than two homes can you realistically be defined as 'in need'?
- They should pay something, not necessary the full council tax. Some councils give only 3 months.
- But not 100% if paying full amount on other property.
- Where the 2nd home is let the tenants should not have to bear the entire additional cost,
- Havering has the % of people of pension age in London - Other boroughs should meet this cost. Q - if you tax a second home how will it work if people only live there for part of a year?
- What proposal - on second homes: a is it the principle.
- unless the second homes are being used as an investment.
- If you can afford more than one property then you should pay ALL on costs.
- many people struggle to own one home let alone two!
- Please with 2nd homes should pay same or more, certainly not less. The are wealthy enough to own the properties.
- If a person can afford 2 properties then they can afford to pay council tax on both properties
- This question is worded badly. I believe that If they can afford 2 properties they can afford to pay 2 council taxes
- A culture of 10% YOY cost reduction should be the norm
- It think it is correct if people are able to afford to own second homes it seems common sense they may have increased monetary assets in comparison to a single home owner, so can afford to pay council tax on their second home, and there seems little logic for a second home owner to be exempt from council tax.
- If people can afford 2 houses they can surely afford 2 lots of council tax
- If people can afford a second home then they should be able to afford their Council Tax
- No claim on Council Tax Relief should be allowed
- If investing in a second property it is at the owner's risk, not our problem, if the property is empty then the owner should pay full charge.
- If the property is put through PSL [Private Sector Leasing] it could house a family and take someone off the waiting list. If it is a second home and they have to pay full council tax they may be more likely to rent it out.
- Yes it would give people an incentive to rent the property out and cut down on property checks
- Accommodation is needed
- If people have enough money for a second home then they should be able to afford to pay the extra 10%
- If the property is owned privately then they should pay.
- People who have 2nd homes have money and do not need a discount
- If you can afford second home you can afford to pay

- I pay full council tax at the age of 83, wife 81, why should I subsidise other people
- If they can afford second homes, they should pay council tax on them
- If a person can afford a second home, hopefully they can afford additional council tax
- Will stop renevation, it would not fund much of the shortfall
- If you have enough money for a 2nd home you should be obliged to support it via council tax
- Cut services instead
- If one could afford a second home, then you could pay the council tax

The Council's response to general comments

Members carefully considered a range of options (which are contained in the 11 July Cabinet report) before selecting the preferred option.

Although most respondents support this proposal, there are some who indicate that they would have preferred the saving to be made over a number of years or a percentage reduction to continue. The Council needs to make savings in 2013/14 in order to make up the shortfall in Government funding. Any delay or amendment to the proposal will reduce the amount of money available to bridge the gap. In the current financial climate, the Council does not have the funds available to defer or amend the proposal to remove the second homes discount.

The Council's response to specific comments

* "Council tax are always increased yearly increasing council tax make no differents increase council tax. We arepaying for the olympics coming to london already"

It should be noted Havering's council tax has remained the same of reduced in the last three years.

** Another respondent said that the money should be raised by reassessing those on benefit who do not or abuse the system. There are proposals to reduce Council Tax support within the preferred option.

***One respondent makes a general request that the local Council Tax Support scheme does not cut benefit for children with disabilities. There are no plans to do this within the preferred option.

Question 2. Should people who own or rent more than one property be able to claim Council Tax relief from the council?

85 Comments to this Question

- If they are either in one or the other they probably only use one lot of services overall
- It's unfair to other tax payer
- THE MORE WEALTHY U R THE BETTER YOUR TREATED
- See above comment.
- It isn't fair. How can people afford two properties?
- 10% - Not much is it! They should sell it.
- The tenants in the second home should pay full council tax.
- As above.
- People who own more than one property should provide fund for another property.
- See above.
- Only for a certain amount of time.
- If they can afford more than 1 house they can afford the Council Tax.
- Because they have more income.
- They are profiting from renting so why should they.
- It is only fair
- As these homeowners could be earning a rent from these properties.
- This could free up some more homes to LET + RENT.
- Again if you can afford to rent or own two properties you should not need to claim Council Tax from council.
- It should be. This seems very wrong. 1 home 1 tax.
- If they are able to own/rent 2 properties they must pay for them too.
- As answer above.
- same as number 1
- We do not think that it is reasonable
- If they can afford two properties they can afford to pay the same tax as everybody else per dwelling
- But only if it is vacant
- None
- This seems a luxury that council tax payers are subsidising
- if you work away from your family home during the weekend rent a small flat and return home at the weekend CT relief should be allowed on the flat.
- But I would anticipate that there may be exceptions.
- In purchasing a property, the buyer should be aware of the obligations that such a purchase entails.
- No 2nd home owners should pay the Full Council Tax & not get any Discount.
- Why pay more to the council. It is right to get a discount.
- If they can afford 2 houses then they can afford council tax .
- If they have more than 1 property they can afford full council tax.
- Council should support only the most needy.
- Not fair on low paid workers and pensioners
- Its a charge for Services
- Anyone with a second property, either using it, renting it out, or refurbishing it for sale or rent (& profit) should not expect to claim tax relief. Why would it be expected?
- It would depend on the circumstances.
- Why should any rented property attract 10% relief?
- With the high amount of people wanting a home and on the waiting list, then no concessions should be given to people who own or rent two properties!

- If you can not afford to pay taxes on both properties, dont buy or rent a 2nd property.
- Please see above.
- they should only get it if it's not in a liveable condition.
- pay full council tax . second ora luxury
- See above.
- See above.
- I did not realise this could happen, and it's not acceptable.
- People who have more than 1 house should not get relief.
- They csn sfford to buy or rent more than one property should be able to afford council tax.
- If they can afford 2 properties then they can afford 2 lots of council tax etc. There is no ratinale for a discount here.
- If somebody has a second property because for instance a parent has died and left them that property it would seem unfair that they should have the burden of council tax while they are trying to sell the inherited property.
- Exemption from Council Tax for second homeowners is a disgrace and morally wrong. Reductions in tax payments for people who are exploiting the property market, artificially raising the cost of housing and making profits out of the public purse and expecting the state to cover for their benefit
- Same reason as above. If these people are renting out there second or third homes, they should be including the council tax within the rent.
- See comments above
- Not the full amount but something.
- See above comment.
- Each case should be treated on its merits + the prevailing circumstances.
- People who own or rent more than one property should pay council tax on each since they can afford to rent/own more than one.
- Same comment as in question 1.
- If rented, a single occupancy should get 10% off, but if more than 1 person renting they should pay the full tax. If empty the owners should pay full amount.
- please see above comment
- Not at all. Same as above
- The council provides services that need maintenance and investment. The council should expect full recovery of costs from household
- only on their first and primary residence, unless there is an unavoidable overlap of liability on 2 homes, which can, at present, be considered for HB/CTB if customer is eligible
- They own 2 properties, so they can afford 2x council tax bills
- If people own or rent out a second home they have an additional valuable asset which can be sold if they wish their property to be exempt from council tax. As stated above i cannot see why a second home owner is allowed a discount on that home as by the very fact they own a second home it can be let or sold for a sum of money meaning theoretically they have greater wealth and unlikely to need a discount.
- If people can afford to buy houses that they don't even live in they should pay the council tax for them
- If a second home is owned they should pay the council tax even if there are major works as again if they can afford a second property then they should be able to afford to pay their council tax
- If they can afford to keep a second property then they should be able to afford to pay.
- Should also look at circumstances and everyone's situation could be different

- The discount should be lifted and people should pay the full charge
- A 10% discount is not enough to incentivise people to rent property
- Even if the 10% discount is removed, people will always find a way of getting round the system
- Will Havering be able to collect the additional 10%?
- There should be a procedure if they don't pay
- the 10% discount should not be removed
- If people have enough money for a second home then they should be able to afford to pay the extra 10%
- It is the owner's responsibility
- The discounts should be given to hard working people with little money
- As above
- They are not entitled this discount
- Cut services instead
- They must be making money on the property so why should they get 10% discount?

The Council's response to these comments

A few respondents felt that there should be exceptions e.g. if someone worked away from home or if they are trying to sell a property that they had inherited. To make exceptions to the proposals would not create the necessary savings.

Question 3. Should properties undergoing repairs be eligible for Council Tax relief?

130 Comments to this Question

- Consideration should be given to individual owner occupiers particularly first time buyers and those with high mortgages.
- rubbish collections, street cleaning. etc still take place whether there are repairs going on or not.
- Repair is more deserving than structural alteration, being not of their choice, but might be hard to make the distinction if people tried to make out the latter was the former for avoidance purposes
- some change should apply depending on income
- AS I FIRST SAID MONEY TALKS!
- Give relief but not 100% and for 6 months only.
- A limited period should be allowed - say 6 months.
- No, because it will speed up repairs, maybe freeing a home for a family to Rent.
- Not really.

- Because at that time no income is coming from the property in question and their income may not be able to meet up.
- If the properties and empty people shouldn't pay council tax this will help them financially.
- There may be some logic to assisting people who are helping to bring local properties up to modern homes standards but only for a limited period.
- It would ensure the owner completes the repairs in the shortest possible time.
- If the property is owned then the owner should provide fund.
- If the property in question is the only one owned by that person, yes. If not, no.
- Because the house or property can still be lived in.
- Most landlords are also experiencing financial difficulties due to non paying tenants etc. Relief would provide encouragement to keep properties to a higher standard.
- Yes if repairs are the result of natural disaster. No if they are for extensions/renovations etc.
- Because the owner is spending a lot of money repairing.
- Should be related to whether it is an "only home" or business. There should be scope for a percentage based assessment. ANYone owning more than one property sould pay full Council Tax
- If they cannot live in the property then why should they have to pay if they are not using the services?
- Shold only be eligible for a maximum of six months, one year is too long
- It depends on wether the major repairs are voluntary or if it's something that HAS to be done. If its voluntary repairs etc then no, I don't think they should be able to claim council tax relief. However, if it's something that wasn't caused by owner or tenant then it needs reviewing.
- You own a property you should pay council tax on this property.
- When you buy your own property your the one responsible for its care of course they can get Equity release which would help.
- but not full 100% possibly 50%
- perhaps a smaller % - 50%
- Some deduction, not 100%
- If they are able to afford the repairs they must be able to pay their bills too.
- It's unlivable, so as long as it has building work to being unlivable it should be exempt.
- Its not in use, why pay council tax.
- As above.
- If the property needs serious repairs then I dont think they should be charged full housing benefit. If its in an aera you really want to redevelop then maybe a relief should be in place. If the property doesnt need much work then it shouldnt be exempt.
- This is because during the alteration the owners may not be earning any money.
- As long as nobody is housed at the time but think 6 months should be enough time for such alterations
- None
- But not if this is one of a portfolio of properties
- but not 100%, usually repair or alteration will enhance value. so that give the owner a profitable outcome
- Unless elderly or the result of fire or flood.
- if they are unoccpied
- Partially- a sliding scale could be used. Considering what council tax is and what it

pays for the services are still likely to be used albeit possibly to a lesser extent.

- With time limits
- It depends whether these are essential repairs or alterations which are a matter of choice.
- But only for a limited period, of say 6 months, and then a sliding scale should be applied to avoid the repairs to be claimed as ongoing for an indefinite period
- If they can afford to buy the property then they surely afford the renovations and not receive the Council Tax Exemption.
- If this is your main residence then there should be no relief.
- I did not no this could be done.
- Just because!
- The owner could be in the low income group. It should be a means tested benefit.
- Whether they are living in that property or not during alterations they still use or expect some if not all the Services the Council supplies There Choice if they take or leave those services.
- Major repairs would not be undertaken unless major profit is expected outcome. With demands & constraints on the Council's funds, why should it be expected to contribute to the profit margin of house vendor? Perhaps if 3months' relief given it would encourage work to be finished to deadline.
- Certainly not up to 12 months.
- Not 100% - perhaps%!!
- People will still be using the property , therefore still using all facilities. The public purse should not be used to subsidise developments for other people
- If the renovation or repair is creating employment it is fair and will encourage employment
- Limit this discount to 50%
- Those people are increasing the price of their properties by the structural works and have no need to have council tax exemption. If they object to this, they can always sell the property "as is" and allow the new owner to do the necessary work.
- But a limited relief for a limited period, not open-ended
- I have lived in my property for 5 years and have been doing lots of major building work and repairs, I was never made aware of this.
- Please see above.
- But undergoing repair should be limited to 3 months.Alteration should pay tax as it is there choice
- only if they are unliveable
- people should buget that in to there repair cost ,same as paying for rubbish taken away and police checking on all propertys in the street
- If they can not be lived in
- Only for people who have only one property.
- Without this incentive it may be difficult for landlords to keep property in good repair or to make imporvements. this would be counter productive in terms of keeping good quality housing in the area.
- If they are uninhabitable - no one to benefit from services.
- What checks are made though during the twelve months.
- But perhaps not up to 100%
- If they are unable to live in the property or rent the property to others
- Will give developers inceptive to not leave homes empty
- the property is still there then they should still pay tax
- If the property is in a state of disrepair they wouldn't be able to afford repairs &

council tax.

- Only for up to 6 months relief not exemption if structural i.e. subsidence work NOT for general improvement/alteration of property.
- Agree this for a limited term such as 12 months to encourage them to effect repairs/improvements etc.
- 12 months is too long to be exempt , even a major change to a property should be completed in 6 months
- but not 100% - maybe only a proportion
- If the property will then improve access to housing for those struggling to find somewhere to live this is a reasonable point. If it's a means for owners of more than one property to exploit the system to feather their own nest then that is wrong and they should be contributing to the funding that provides services in the Borough
- It depends on ones circumstances. Surely these peoples home or buildings insurance would cover costs.
- Only if the property is not occupied, and also reduce the exemption from 12 months to 6 months.
- This should be limited to a shorter period - 3 months
- Only if the property is undergoing repair because of damage or to correct a structural defect, If the property is undergoing alteration because the owner wishes to add value to the property, then no.
- Depending on the circumstances.
- If they are not fit for human occupation then no tax or not all tax.
- People suffering for example flood or fire damage need to live elsewhere, Houses being converted into flats will provide more accommodation. But simply delaying tactics designed to keep them unoccupied.....
- If unoccupied.
- but NOT when the repaired property is a second home.
- They deserve council tax relief as the owners are paying for repairs on the property.
- Only if they are not being lived in.
- Difficult - if someone's only bought a property to do up and sell then why should they get a discount. If it's to be their only home this could really help them.
- If necessary repairs for safety or listed status requirements then seems ok. If major alterations are to add value for the owners own gain or business gain then no.
- The current 12 month rule should be amended to 6 months except for listed properties which would attract THE FULL 12 MONTHS
- but perhaps not for as long as 12 months
- As long as they are not being habited
- Unless they are not being lived in
- But for a much shorter period as by giving 12 months means that most people would not rush to complete if they do not have to pay
- I can see the sense in this as a property undergoing repairs is by its very nature uninhabitable for letting or purchase.
- I think the discount should be reduced to 50% rather than 100% but that they should get some help as they will be paying C/Tax on the address they are living at whilst the work is done.
- They should pay the council tax even if major works are being carried out
- If the local authority has issued an enforcement notice this should be taken into account. The enforcement notice should be issued separately.
- Rather than remove the discount completely, if an old property is bought the owner should be given around six months to make the property liveable.
- If a property is bought more cheaply that should be taken into consideration. Also

they could be paying to live somewhere else while their property is being refurbished

- If they bought the property cheaply, then they should have budgeted for this
- If living in Havering they would be asked to pay twice on the second home
- Rather than charge at the Band at which the property was bought, the charge could be at a lower Band.
- If people are buying a rundown property, a discount would give people incentives to do the property up and make good use of it.
- If a young couple are buying a rundown property and living with parents while they are doing it up they should pay council tax, but if they are having to rent else where they should not pay This might deter people from taking on properties
- Builders will always find a way round it, if the exemptions are taken away they will find another way
- This does not give people incentives to do repairs
- Maybe reduce the period rather than take it away altogether, not everyone will have surplus cash to repair property and, while it's empty, they are not using the services
- They have to pay to live elsewhere while making their own property liveable
- Some people doing major works move from room to room rather than leave the property empty
- If an exemption is allowed the local authority should monitor the exemption more closely with 3 month checking periods, putting the onus on the customer to show it is still needed,
- It should not take 12 months to put in bathrooms and kitchens
- Who will benefit from this - individuals or major builders?
- Look at the market it is applying to.
- You need to look at the bigger picture
- Landlords may not like it.
- If it is a way of getting landlords to turn properties around more quickly, it may be good to do but you may also need to look at circumstances, e.g. landlords who only rent to people on benefit may have concerns
- Smaller landlords could lose money
- If private it is the responsibility of the landlord to pay if the property is undergoing repairs. It could be an incentive for the landlord or agent to carry out repairs quickly so that they are able to rent it out.
- If they have the money for the repairs they have the money to pay council tax like I do
- They are properties not paying council tax now, so it will only be once
- 50%
- They can afford these properties, let them pay council tax
- Assumedly the people who usually live in these properties will be paying CT elsewhere and are not using any services
- It is only 12 months not worth the upset
- Cut services instead
- It helps to get finance for repairs quicker if no council tax
- If they're lived in they should be eligible regardless!

The Council's response to these comments

Although 47% of respondents were in favour of this proposal, there were suggestions that exceptions be made e.g. for first time buyers, those with high mortgages or where there had

been damage due to fire or flood. Some respondents said that there should be a shorter exemption period e.g. 6 months or a reduced exemption such as 50%.

This is not possible within the current financial climate, as the necessary savings could not be found if exceptions were made to the proposals.

Question 4. Should unoccupied and unfurnished properties be eligible for council tax relief?

107 Comments to this Question

- Only if owner has one property i.e. owner occupier moved out and all furniture has been removed from premises.
- why is the property empty when there is such a need for social housing?
- I have used this when I had survey problems having moved out to sell my flat. I was renting, not multi-owning. If it is an inherited property or hard to sell I think some leeway is ok, with a hassling officer to encourage people not to drag their feet
- There should be some change
- THEIR CRYING OUT FOR VACANT PROPERTIES EVERYWHERE WHY NOT!
- But not 100%, they should still make some payment - say 50%.
- A limited period should be allowed.
- Add up all my previous comments.
- Why are they unoccupied? Must be answered.
- The bankers should pay for the properties.
- A maximum of two weeks could be considered between one tenant leaving and another moving in.
- It would ensure they rented/sold the property in question.
- Unoccupied and unfurnished properties should not be eligible for council tax relief because there not available.
- See above.
- No longer than 6 months.
- For a period of 6-12 months. If a tenant wrecks a property, time is required to bring the property back into use.
- Because if it's unfurnished you have to buy everything.
- Don't want to pay it, don't buy it.
- Banks have been the cause of many of our financial problems and have been ripping off the public purse and through their poor management of mortgages caused by excessive greed and profit before people have wrecked lives.
- Again, if they are not using the services, why should they pay?
- I am not sure on this one as there are so many different situations that this could apply to. I believe that there should be a criteria and each case taken on it own merit. ie if probate is involved this can take sometime and the property cannot be rented, sold etc until then.

- With the shortfall in housing, properties should not be left unoccupied causing development of flats.
- Why would you keep an unoccupied unfurnished property no body in it sell it.
- Every house should pay a tax.
- If someone dies and cannot sell, but not on multiple property, this is just enabling a rich investment, not a home.
- They can rent them out, or sell them if they are not able to manage those properties.
- As above.
- As stated above the owner may not be earning nothing.
- Except when it is the result of a death of the owner/occupier when the exemption should stay.
- None
- But not if this is one of a portfolio of properties
- but at a low rate
- not using council resources
- There is a housing shortage and leaving properties unoccupied should be discouraged.
- Such properties would continue to be left empty if any discount is offered. To levy a tax on such properties may mean that such properties are offered to the rental market thus increasing the available rental stock
- Again if they can afford to own the properties they can afford to pay the Council Tax.
- The property when vacant does not impact on the workload of the council. Thinking of it the council only pick up my rubbish.
- This is only a good idea if you have lost a family member, it helped me out no end. till the property was sold.
- But only if the low income beneficiary intends to move into that property.
- The property still belongs to someone, and it has to be fair/honest above any reason or profit.
- There should be no benefit to landlords in not keeping properties habitable & occupied. Housing shortages make a nonsense of tax relief on empty homes.
- A 10% charge is fair
- If no one is living in the property then there is no one to benefit from the services that the Council Tax provides.
- Encourages owners to keep properties unoccupied when there is a demand for accommodation.
- if the discount was not offered it would encourage second home owners to make sure they are occupied. furthermore the council should not be encouraging. second home owners to keep an empty house.
- But only for a limited period, say 6 months.
- Giving exemption for this just encourages the owners to leave the property unoccupied. In these times of gross shortages of accomadation, this is non-sensical and even obscene.
- Please see above.
- If these properties were sold it would help the housing shortage
- only for the 6 months whils a new occupier could be found.
- comes part of the budget , u got a property , then u pay all taxes and services on it
- Not if multiple properties are owned
- Properties should not be left empty in the first place.
- This could be varied to ensure that social landlords are not detrimentally affected by any loss of exemption - this could affect ability to continue to provide good low cost

housing in an area.

- If being sold or renovated etc.
- So many properties are in a state of disrepair, this might make the owners do something about it.
- Only in certain circumstances, such as when the owner has died and the property is up for sale. If the property is empty and unfurnished for any other reason the owner should consider letting it to help reduce homelessness or pay for it.
- Maybe those properties could be exempt for up to 3 months. With the current housing shortage, I don't see why a property should be empty for so long.
- As Registered Providers comes within this bracket then there does need continue to be an exemption for social housing. With regard to private landlords whose business is letting property and they are profit making then maybe the exemption could be reduced to 3 months?
- If the owner can be found then they should be paying tax
- If they own the property/(s) they should still pay whether or not it's occupied.
- No occupants therefore not receiving services.
- But reduce to 3 months to ensure that properties are let. Lanlords may be encouraged to ask for higher rents if they can have 6 months free of council tax while seeking tenants. If the period is reduced they may be more eager to let.
- 6 months seems a reasonable time to either sell or get a property rented out.
- The answer is yes for people who have taken over the property due to the death of a relative or family member and are in the process of administering the estate. Anyone who owns more than one property besides this should contribute so it's a NO for them
- The owner has an obligation to pay for the property that they have taken on, why should working class council tax payers with one home pay for it? we haven't chosen for these people to own more than one home. These people do it for the money and will one day be fairly well off.
- Yes but perhaps reduce the exemption to 3 months to encourage people to rent / furnish the property more quickly.
- This should be limited to a shorter period - 1 month
- There are too many empty properties in the country when there is an increasing problem with homelessness. If I had my way all empty properties left unoccupied for more than 3 months without very good reasons would be repossessed by the council.
- Some relief, but not 6 months. Maybe 3 months.
- Unless they are obliged to live away e.g. following work, in hospital or similar.
- Not using council services so why pay
- Again, each case should be looked at individually.
- Unoccupied/unfurnished properties have no one living there so deserve exemption.
- This is ambiguous. Unoccupied - No. Unfurnished - frankly a property could be unfurnished but occupied.
- Many properties unoccupied have blocked movement in the market. This could bring a release to others + bring in some money.
- Only if the owner owns one property and is hospitalised or away in the army or the owner has died and family and trying to sell it.
- depends on personal circumstances
- This depends on the circumstances. People owing multiple properties should not be exempt
 - This may help to promote a quicker turnaround of private/Housing Assoc. lettings. -Provided LBH housing have no void periods...otherwise the Council will be billing itself for the empty periods! - Tenants in receipt of Benefits who

have to take a tenancy/move at short notice may have an overlapping rent/Council Tax liability on both homes. The proposal to remove empty/unfurnished exemption completely would mean that the tenant would have to pay the full charge of C/tax for the first property, whereas at present they may get 2 homes Housing Benefit on the rent and an empty/unfurnished exemption on the Council Tax for up to 4 weeks. Council tenants are likely to be the losers in this scenario, unless LBH voids are completed on the day of the new tenancy.

- They should be exempt from council tax relief as an unoccupied property has nobody living in it and so I would suggest is not eligible for charges for services in the vicinity and unfurnished property is uninhabitable and cannot be mortgaged or let out for a rental or mortgage income.
- Again it's obviously a second property otherwise it would be lived in. Council tax should be paid.
- I think if they own multiple properties then no, but if this is the only property they own then yes.
- Full council tax should be paid on empty and unfurnished properties as people could leave them empty for a long time.
- Homes are needed in this borough.
- This could prevent properties from being left empty as people would be more likely to rent their property out.
- Properties that are going to be demolished as part of regeneration schemes should be looked at as it could take longer than the current six months exemption, if they lose that then it would cost more
- Suggest the council could give some kind of discount if owner was trying to sell the property
- Work with the empty properties officer.
- The 6 months exemption has to remain, otherwise people could move in and it could be an opportunity for fraud
- It would take resources to check every property
- If it was a council-owned property, LBH would be billing itself, this would result in a loss in collection. But it would turn Council homes around more quickly
- Two homes benefit has to be paid on the old home until it is voided
- It might make landlords turn around homes more quickly
- I would be surprised if there were many empty properties due to the demand for properties. If the property is empty – why and for what reasons?
- Private landlords should be responsible for council tax. If a landlord wants a property to be let out then they should be responsible and prevent it from staying empty
- As above
- They will be making enough already
- 25%
- Six months only
- But for a shorter period e.g. 2 months
- If more than 2 owned
- It is only 6 months not worth the worry
- This should only apply if this/the owner only own one house/property
- Cut services instead
- At the end of the day they make money from the properties

The Council's response to these comments

Although 56% agreed with this proposal, some respondents felt that the exemption should be retained but for a shorter period or in specific circumstances. The Council needs to make savings in 2013/14 in order to make up the shortfall in Government funding. Any delay or amendment to the proposal will reduce the amount of money available to bridge the gap. In the current financial climate, the Council does not have the funds available to defer or amend the proposal to remove council tax relief. Removing this exemption may also increase the number of properties available to rent or buy.

Question 5 Should banks and building societies pay Council Tax on properties they repossess?

93 Comments to this Question

- Maybe exempt from council tax for 3 months only.
- You'll be lucky!
- Limited reasonable time exempt with hassling if they leave it too long as above
- Because they take repossessions, they are charging ludicrous amounts for houses/properties. So they make a 1000% anyway.
- They can easily afford to pay and caused homelessness
- WHICH EVER U SAY THE BANKS USE THEIR CLIENTS MONEY TO A DEGREE!
- Again a limited period should be allowed for disposal. It would not be the bank which is paying. It would be the previous owner.
- These are the richest people!
- They won't be so ready to repossess. They should! If they hang onto property the council is losing council tax.
- They should be exempted until who ever buys the property takes charge.
- The properties are being used to make money so banks and building societies need to pay. They make a big profit and pocket the money.
- They have far more money than we do and need to be encouraged to sell on repossessed properties.
- Should pay at least 50% as at present no incentive to move.
- Because it is their responsibility.
- Again: Are you kidding? Do I think that the people who are in a better position to be able to afford to pay Council Tax than any single individual, should be made to pay it? Yes, I probably do!
- Because Building Soc. and Banks have control of properties.
- Why should the tax payers foot this?!
- If the property is not being lived in why should they pay?
- Yes, Yes, Yes. considering half of them are using our money! I strongly believe that they should turn into landlords in these situations and have to rent the properties back to the unfortunate families who are struggling in these hard times. This would also have the benefit of not putting people on the local authority housing waiting list. two problems solved in one.
- The property then becomes theirs so therefore council tax should be paid by them.
- When banks etc resell these properties in a share they will make a profit.
- if they don't get it it may be they pass that on to the next owner and this could slow the housing market down even more
- We shouldn't subsidise banks etc.
- Perhaps for a limited time.
- Banks tax everyone for everything, tax them, they are not any different than all of us.
- As above.
- If un-occupied. If occupied then the tenant should pay
- Because the property is no longer available.
- Why not - what's good enough for a hard working person is good enough for our rich

banks and building societies

- So there is an incentive to sell them quickly. The tax should be at a reduced rate, say 50%
- None
- Without a recourse to the previous homeowner whose home has been repossessed. Further financial burden should not be placed on somebody who has lost his/her home.
- having repossessed a property they are then responsible for it therefore they should pay up like everyone else!
- although this option could result in costs being passed to the bank customers
- only 6 months relief as per everyone else that has an empty property
- but maybe there should be a time limit
- Surely these properties should be rented out or sold as soon as possible.
- This is problematical as the owner has defaulted may be charged for any taxes that are or will be due thus increasing their debt
- As long as it is empty.
- If they have the property they should pay.
- Once the property has been repossessed it is no longer owned by a needy person.
- These organisations demand their pound of flesh on their loans interests, they make a profit on others' miseries, it's only fair they abide by the same rules as their customers.
- Exemption indefinitely surely encourages organisations to hold on for the best possible price, rather than getting property back on the market.
- 6 months only
- Maybe for a short period but not indefinitely.
- Suggest % paid - again some payment would encourage properties to be placed back on the market - in a time of need
- Same as previous answer this would encourage banks and building societies to sell the house at the earliest opportunity
- There should be a clause that they should maintain the property during this period.
- They should perhaps be allowed an exemption for a limited period (6 months) but charged thereafter if the property has not been sold or rented
- If they repossess it, then they own it. If Banks etc own property, then they can afford to pay full council tax on it!
- Repossession is effectively a change of ownership. If full tax was paid before, it follows it should be after as well.
- but I can see this costing more to collect than what you get in
- There is no reason for them not paying after 3 months when they should have the property reoccupied.
- If the banks own properties, they should not be exempt from paying council tax.
- Why aren't they subjected to the same rules & exemptions/discounts as everyone else - as present rules.
- Maybe for a period but not indefinitely.
- Why not!!
- They would only add it to the bill for the poor unfortunate sod who has been repossessed.
- I guess so, because the owner cannot live in it any longer as the bank has taken the property back. Most owners would have only got into this situation through genuine financial hardship rather than lack of responsibility and it would be harsh to ask them to pay council tax

- This is no different to the Registered Providers where they evict someone. Maybe this should have a similar exemption of 6 months. I expect they would add this to any debt of the ex-home owner anyway.
- It is another way banks and building societies can get away with not paying their fair share of tax
- Commercial operation. Exemptions should help people not large businesses.
- Banks generally auction properties as soon as possible to avoid cost to the borrower and these costs would just be passed on to the borrower, who has presumably already lost everything
- Banks have plenty of money to pay for the costs that they have chosen to take into their possession. I think that they should pay for council tax.
- Absolutely not. This will encourage the banks to sell the property quickly and not leave empty properties indefinitely.
- Banks and Building Societies are too quick to repossess properties. They are the prime cause of the global economic crisis so they should receive no pecuniary advantage whatsoever.
- In view of question 4 above - why should the banks be exempt.
- Unless they have temporary tenants e.g. the previous owners.
- They should pay a %
- They will be making money in the property.
- And that cost should NOT be reflected in the sale price or passed on to the next inhabitants.
- This would force them to sell the property quicker.
- It would encourage them to be processed to be sold promptly - perhaps allow a defined period of 6 months.
- They get enough money to pay it!!!
- The incremented cost to the bank/building society will prevent some evictions
- As repossessed properties in the main are bought quickly, I think it is right banks and building societies pay council tax on the properties.
- They are going to earn their money back on them. £100 per month won't make any difference to a bank.
- Maybe a short exemption, not indefinite, this will make them lower the selling price and get the property occupied quicker.
- Banks and building societies should pay full Council Tax on properties they repossess because this may avoid the process of repossessions being carried out so quickly especially on families with young children
- If this charge is passed onto the person who defaults on their mortgage, they would get into more debt.
- We are surprised at the number of empty houses in the borough
- They should pay full the council tax but this would depend on how long the process takes
- The Bank may pass that cost onto the customer once the property is sold
- Banks should pay this Council Tax but they may pass this debt on to the person who had the mortgage, if they were legally allowed to do this
- Banks/building societies should be responsible for Council Tax because they have an interest in the property and could sell the property on and get the money back.
- You are making the rich richer and the poor poorer. They make enough money out of repossessions so they should pay council tax on the properties
- We all have to pay our way they will get it back on sale
- They should pay tax. They roll us so much money

- They can afford to turn round properties quickly and nothing should be indefinite
- For 12 months
- Cut services instead
- Because they can afford to pay so why not?
- Not really sure! Possibly short term!

The Council's response to these comments

Although most respondents supported this proposal, there was some concern that mortgage lenders may pass this charge onto the original mortgage holder or the new buyer.

However the mortgage lender is the liable person during this period and they have no legal right to transfer their liability to a third party.

Principle: In developing schemes, local authorities should consider incentivising claimants into work.

Question 6. Should working age people who receive Council Tax Support and live in properties banded E to H receive more Council Tax Support than those living in properties banded A to D?

97 Comments to this Question

- Should probably be assessed on personal circumstances,
- The question is confusing and misleading. It depends on their circumstances.
- Unfair and favour the rich
- THEY GET VARIOUS CASH BENEFITS BY OWNING THEIR OWN
- Additional support only if their needs warrant it.
- Strongly agree.
- They should move to a lower band property and not receive more support.
- Too many other Living increases, larger properties means more inhabitants thus more income.
- The properties are not much different from band A to D so that should be the same.
- They should move to somewhere cheaper if their income is limited.
- Yes if children are involved in the household.
- Although , either way, don't delude yourselves that increasing people's financial hardship gives them an 'incentive to work'. It doesn't: It just makes them that much more bitter and resentful. If you're in your late fifties and haven't worked for ten years, increasing that person's financial burden doesn't increase the likelihood of anyone employing them.
- Would depend on the timescales involved as anyone unfortunate enough to lose their job shouldn't be rushed out of their home and onto the street as a first priority.
- Their calculation used for all properties should be the same. It will result in some people getting more in money but the same percentage. That would be the fair procedure. A person shouldn't be penalised for living in a more expensive property.
- People who buy bigger properties should know they will pay larger council tax. They chose to buy big.
- These people choose to live in larger properties bigger cost more.
- If you can't afford a larger property - move to smaller.
- Maximum band D is okay.
- My husband & I both work to make sure we pay for everything, I do not want to pay for others anymore!
- People may be stuck in their family house above Band D due to lack of finance and access to finance. They have little choice in where they live.
- Everybody should be same.
- Because they earn money whilst working.
- If people wish to live in large expensive properties, it is their choice. Other tax payers should not have to pay full tax when those in large properties do not. Large family's receive a lot of state aid and this should be taken if necessary to pay the Council Tax.

- None
- no, if they can afford to live in higher value properties they should be able to pay their way
- People should downshift to a cheaper banded property
- just because you live in a big house doesn't mean that you always have a big income particularly in these days of high unemployment and no wage increases.
- Working age does not define if they are working so unsure what the question is asking
- It depends upon the size of the property and number of occupants.
- Uncertain about this one. If they can't afford the house. I should suggest down sizing.
- if they can down grade their property too save money this is a better way to go. otherwise I think they should pay more.
- Poor people should not live in large houses. If they want council support they should sell their homes and move into smaller properties.
- It makes more sense to give a discount but that a reduced amount is payable. Why should anyone expect 100% relief? It isn't helpful to anyone that once on Income Support for instance, you pay absolutely nothing. Even on a very tight budget, everyone needs to contribute something. Getting into the habit of having everything scot free does nothing to encourage responsibility or restraint. If you are lucky enough to live in a large or superior property, you shouldn't expect more of taxpayers' money to settle your bills.
- It's not a tax or wealth payment, these large homes receive more service than one resident in band D eg. one bag of rubbish against 4-5 bags from large house.
- If they have Sky and want to claim council tax then they should be refused the support.
- Can't think of any reason why those living in E to H should receive preferential treatment.
- Although the council tax in E to H is ridiculously high when you consider D pay just £1,501 with F G paying over £2k and H over £3k all for the same services!
- The size of a house should not dictate the size of a discount given.
- If you can afford a larger property you should be able to afford the council tax, also there could be more people living in the property.
- In these times, when nobody can say their job is safe, and with such high unemployment, anyone can find themselves suddenly unemployed with little chance of finding a job. If they don't have the money coming in, then they cannot pay it out and should get council tax support regardless of the band of their property.
- I feel that people who have worked and bought large homes, should not be penalised, when their circumstances change due to unfortunate incidents. Just as when people can not get help with their £300.00 mortgage, when they fall out of work, yet other families can get their ridiculous priced rents paid.
- Having a better property and more tax support as well is unfair to those who have to live in smaller properties and pay their full way.
- they knew they were buying/renting a higher band property so they should account for it from their own pockets, instead of relying on handouts.
- you pay for what you live in. you don't get cheaper elec or gas in big properties why should you get cheaper council tax
- Because they have the option to downgrade or move in a cheaper area if they find it difficult to pay.
- Just because a person lives in a band E-H doesn't mean that they can't fall on hard times & need help like everyone else.
- They should downsize or pay up.

- If you can afford to live in a house like that you shouldn't be receiving help - downsize and live within your means!
- if they are working on a low income and need a larger property because they have more children! Otherwise, some families may have to move into properties which are too small for them and live in overcrowded conditions which will have a negative impact on the children. If they are on long-term benefits I am not sure, as some people continue to have children and then expect the taxpayer to foot the bill and provide larger housing, without intending to work themselves.
- I do not think a blanket ban could be enforced. Though not in your local authority we have had properties in the past that have been in the higher value bands. Also some mortgage rescue homes could be in a higher bracket and these individuals may not be in a position to pay extra.
- If the claimant is actively seeking employment
- People on state benefits should not be free to choose higher cost accommodation at the tax payer's expense. Support should be limited to lower than the average value accommodation.
- It depends on their circumstances, as a general principal No, but for people who have been made redundant they may need a bit of help for just a few months, so maybe a scaled relief which drops after 6 months
- If people are living at a particular address and through no fault of their own are forced to give up work or have lost their jobs it is humane and decent to let them live in their home.
- The assessment should be on individual circumstances and take into account that circumstances do change.
- I think it is good to teach young people to pay their way in society; however will it demotivate those on lower wages and in smaller housing to work?
- I don't know enough about the support scheme to comment properly. Someone living in a larger band property will have larger bills and council tax to pay, so should it be means tested? Alternatively, there may be one person in a large property, but with very high mortgage etc, against 5 working age people living in a smaller property claiming more council tax support.
- There should be some exceptions to this e.g. the elderly
- Benefits should go to those who really need them.
- They could always move to a smaller house.
- For a limited period. People should not have to move into a smaller (etc) dwelling if they are made redundant say, and need time to find another job, or are abandoned by partner.
- Only if claiming DLA.
- Hardship claims should be examined.
- They could always choose to move to a lower rated property.
- But restrict to band B level in ALL?
- But do two things - NO support above band D and ALL support restricted to band B level.
- above certain level receive NO support.
- the bigger the house - doesn't mean more money.
- people in 'E to H' have the potential to downsize.
- The support should be at an affordable level applicable to all
- because their Council Tax bill is higher; they shouldn't be penalised, when they fall on hard times, for owning a nice home
- It should be dependant on Income NOT Area!! or Band!!
- It is clear that if people live in such large properties in band E to H the incomes of the

household will be high whether in work or not as the persons concerned in those properties are likely to have partners or family members in work and in these bands properties are valued in the high hundreds of thousands of pounds in the inner and outer london areas and if necessary be sold to move to a cheaper area and the proceeds of the sale could be used to support themselves until the unemployed person concerned finds a job.

- If you live in a property that has been hard earned, and fall on hard times, why shouldn't you be eligible to receive the same assistance regardless of the band
- Only if they don't need to have a house in that band. Ie if they have 5 children you can't expect them to live in a 2 bed and they shouldn't be punished for it.
- Only on a short term basis though, encouraging either return to work or downsizing
- They should be capped. If you live in a higher Band you should be able to afford it or consider downsizing
- Older people living in higher Banded properties could be asset rich but cash poor
- There could be some kind of safety net, if it someone suddenly became unemployed, while they were looking for employment
- If taking in a lodger the income from the lodger should be taken into account
- Are further cuts going to be made if the shortfall can't be met?
- Families do need to get their priorities right, i.e. putting food on the table and keeping a roof over their head.
- They can downsize (depending on the size of the family) or could move to a cheaper area.
- The cost of moving is high and they would also need to sell the property.
- People who have worked all their lives in high paid jobs living in higher Banded properties should not be penalised. If they own their property and lose their job there should be some kind of protection e.g. a year. If renting, they should downsize.
- Each case should be treated differently. If someone falls ill, give them time to move or get better
- Homeowners who fall into hardship should not be discriminated against
- Rather than the higher Bands to Band D, restrict all Bands to 90%.
- People in larger houses choose to live there but people in higher Banded properties may have been working and paid in for years. It seems unfair to do this if this is the case.
- If pensioners need to be protected we have got to make cuts somewhere
- You need to look at the conditions. If it is a big family and they need a bigger property, the Council should look at the individuals and make a decision on that.
- The changes are valid, it cannot go on forever, changes are needed. It depends on family circumstances, look at each case on its merit
- If it doesn't mean hardship
- If these people can not support themselves living in larger properties then down size!
- Cut services instead
- If they choose to live in higher banded areas, they should be able to pay the diff
- One should live in accomodation they can afford

The Council's response to these comments

Although most respondents agreed with this proposal, a few were concerned about larger

families or those who could afford this liability when they took it on.

A number of benefits remain available to large families and the Council will continue to support troubled families as part of its Key Priorities for the Community.

Question 7. Under the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme, other adults such as an adult son, daughter, other relative or friend who lives in the claimant's home are expected to contribute to household bills such as Council Tax.

89 Comments to this Question

- not sure what the period is (weekly/monthly?) nor what their income would be but this does seem like a reasonable place to consider saving
- Because it should be for the house not the people. As everyone has difficulty finding money to survive
- Yes but provided that the increase takes into account the other person's income.
- Every adult of working age should contribute towards council tax
- LOWER CLASS WHO RENT HAVE TO BEG FOR RELIEF WHY NOT THEM
- The total income should be the arbiter of the amount.
- Only if working, sadly not enough jobs.
- They are working the have more money.
- If they work yes.
- Been tried. Didn't Thatcher try it!
- If they are working it is only fare they contribute more towards the council tax.
- They need to pay their fair share of borough financial obligations like the rest of us.
- It depends up specific circumstances of the persons income.
- Yes other adult working should pay more.
- To implement a blanket, across-the-board policy like this without taking individual circumstances into account is already bizarre; increasing the reduction only makes it more so.
- Because the Mother + Father (in this case) would be paying the Council Tax.
- Depends on their income, age etc.
- A home consists of all who live there and all should fairly contribute.
- Providing they get a reasonable income.
- Yes - if they are working.
- Give people someincentive to work rather than doing their best to milk the system. I'd be better off if I was divorced & as a private tenant the council would have to pick up my bills, but I'm a person with a bit of self-respect.
- This amounts to an effective 'tax' rate of 38% on a 26 year on JSA which is not fair or acceptable.
- They should pay their own share. It should increase if council tax increase.
- As above.
- The same as above.
- Total family income is taxed in other ways, why not council Tax?
- None
- no there are too many facets to given benefit rules and others. they should be simplified leaving no room to work the systems
- I don't know how much they would then have to pay in total.
- We are already paying too much. Why squeeze us even more.
- However the income of the 'other adults' should be considered.

- But doubling the deduction seems too much of an increase. Surely, a lower percentage than 100 would seem fairer, as those affected are already working, paying Income Tax and NI, & contributing by reducing the amount of relief awarded.
- If there are more than one wage earner in the house then they should contribute to the Council Tax
- All working wage earners should make a contribution respective where the Wage comes from.
- Assuming the above figures are monthly reductions - if so consider that the "other working adult" should contribute that sum equivalent to that payable if living as a lone person (25% discount) - & reduce the Council Tax benefit accordingly.
- This will depend on individual circumstances
- As long as it is retrospect.
- It rather depends on how much the other adults earn and whether they can realistically afford to make a greater contribution.
- They live at home because they cannot afford to move out! This reeks of the return of The Poll Tax!
- Assuming they can afford to do so
- 'Should' and 'will' are far from the same thing.
- This where poll tax was a better idea ever one paid there share
- equal bills for all in house .if working there pay towards the tax , which there use the services
- If above minimum wage
- If one or more people in a household is working full time, they should not be any council tax benefits in the first place.
- This is still a cheaper option than living on their own. Although this could be hard to implement.
- People who can should pay their way.
- If a person is able to work they should contribute towards council tax, not being subsidised by the council.
- It is ridiculous to have a single mother on full benefits when she has a son living with her and earning.
- Non dependant deductions are increasing across all HB. The above is a significant increase that may not be achievable for most. I assume this takes into account Lodgers aswell?
- All occupants benefiting from services.
- The extra cost should be deducted from the claimant
- This will happen more because of proposed changes to housing benefit so there should be a reasonable expectation that someone in work should contribute
- I think those who are not working should make a donation towards council tax as they are usually better off than people working on a lower wage.
- This is too high an increase in one year and should be limited to 10%.
- I am glad to see that the amount will depend on their income. Apprentices earn little.
- They should pay a % of occupancy i.e. 3 adults (2 claiming, 1 working) = 33% of council tax.
- Provided the graded scale is applied,
- Every occupant of the house should contribute.
- The council must do a proper inventory against the census return of who lives where - there will be cases of adults living with parents who are not registered for council tax. Not everyone cares if they have a vote or not.
- But also end single person discount. Council has not taken into consideration need to

promote employment.

- Working adults who live with a council tax payer who is disabled should also be asked to contribute to the council tax (rather than being exempt and not asked to contribute).
- This would elect some manipulation of the benefit scheme and be a realistic proposed reflecting the benefit of having housing
- provided more income bands are introduced than there are at present
- Though other adults living in the unemployed claimants home may be on a low income, if there is an income coming into the house this is more whatever, than a completely unemployed household is likely to be receiving.
- It should be divided equally between the amount of adults living there.
- Yes if they have a well paid job then a higher deduction should be made
- People under occupying could take in a lodger
- The members of the public group also asked for these additional comments to be recorded:
 - People should only be placed in a high rise should be for a limited period so they don't get 'cabin fever' (not all agreed with this).
 - This country is a small place and people claiming should have some kind of ID e.g. face and thumb, this could cut down on fraud
 - More needs to be done, e.g. stop people having a baby to gain a home.
 - Generally think that the Council is getting there
 - Children would not be able to rent for that amount. They can't rely on parents to pay for everything. 'Welcome to the real world'
 - For consistency the £6.55 deduction should be increased to £12
 - The Revenues and Benefits Service needs to look at the design of council tax benefit letters. If multiple letters are being sent out, a covering letter should be sent to explain this
 - If the non-dependant is earning a lot then they should pay more if they are not paying rent
 - It should be assessed on income. If they do not want to declare their earnings the highest deductions should be used
 - When deductions are made for non-dependants, they suddenly move on, it could cause people to commit fraud. We should check if their mail is still going to the property. We should also check every 12 months
 - Non-dependants may not co-operate and may be unwilling to part with their money and households could be worse off.
 - Will Council tax go up if we choose not to take this option?
 - Yes they should contribute more, yes they should pay a higher charge
 - Depending who is in the household other adults should help with the rent.
 - I would not have a problem if deductions were increased
 - Maybe there won't be so many lazy people poncing off there parents
 - We all have to do our bit
 - If they are working, they should be contributing and this will take the pressure of their parents
 - Cut services instead
 - This sounds like poll tax which caused a riot! But a fairer option for childless people also don't have kids if you can't afford them!

The Council's response to these comments

There was concern among some respondents that non-dependants on a low income could be penalised. The level of the deduction has been carefully considered and reflects the non-dependant's income and circumstances.

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London Borough of Havering Final Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Introduction

Council Tax Benefit will be abolished from 1 April 2013. In its place each local authority is required by Section 9 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to produce its own scheme to reduce the liability of working age applicants it considers to be in financial need.

This document contains Havering's final Council Tax Support Scheme which the Council is required to produce under the provisions of Schedule 4 of the act.

The Council has decided to adopt its own scheme which has due regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government's policy intentions and unequivocally protects pensioners.

The Local Council Tax Support scheme is to be interpreted and applied in accordance with The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 which set out what must be included in the scheme.

The Council is required to design its own scheme to assist applicants who are below state pension credit age. If it fails to do this by 31 January 2013 it will be required to adopt the default scheme as set out in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) Regulations 2012.

It may also be amended if the expected cost of the new scheme changes before 31 January 2013 to such an extent that the scheme requires further amendment.

In this document 'the new scheme' means the proposed CTS scheme and 'the current scheme' means the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme (CTB).

The Regulations provide a detailed scheme for the calculation of CTS where an applicant is a pensioner which are incorporated within the Council's new scheme.

Unless expressly stated otherwise the provisions outlined below relate solely to working age applicants under the new scheme.

Havering's Local Council Tax Support Scheme

This document sets out the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme for eligible working age Council Tax payers to receive support.

The scheme applicable to pensioners is defined in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, Part 3, Schedules 1 to 6, which is adopted within this scheme.

The procedure for the operation of the Scheme summarised below is made in accordance with Schedules 7 and 8 of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012.

The principles of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme are:

- Local authorities will be expected to manage the 10% reduction in subsidised expenditure.
- Regulations have been set to protect claimants of state pension credit age.
- Local authorities must consult on their schemes with precepting authorities and the public.
- The Council must adopt the final scheme before 31 January 2013 or the default scheme will apply.
- Local authorities should aim to protect vulnerable groups.
- In developing schemes, local authorities should consider incentivising claimants into work.

The Local Council Tax Support Scheme includes the following:

- Introduction and definitions
- Prescribed of persons
- Provisions relating to entitlement under the scheme
- Applicable amounts
- Maximum Council Tax Reduction
- Alternative Maximum Council Tax Reduction
- Amount of reduction under the scheme
- Assessment of Income and Capital under the scheme
- Students
- Applications
- Extended reductions
- Period of entitlement and changes of circumstances
- Schedules

The new scheme has adopted the existing scheme as defined in the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 as they stand subject to the following amendments:

1. Increase weekly non-dependant deductions

That Paragraph 58 in Part 6 of the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 shall be taken to read as follows:

“58.

- (1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, the non-dependant deductions in respect of a day referred to in regulation 57 (maximum council tax benefit) shall be—
 - (a) in respect of a non-dependant aged 18 or over in remunerative work, £20.00 x 1/7;
 - (b) in respect of a non-dependant aged 18 or over to whom sub-paragraph (a) does not apply, £6.00 × 1/7.
- (2) In the case of a non-dependant aged 18 or over to whom paragraph (1)(a) applies, where it is shown to the appropriate authority that his normal gross weekly income is—
 - (a) less than £183.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be that specified in paragraph (1)(b);
 - (b) not less than £183.00 but less than £316.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be £9.00;
 - (c) not less than £316.00 but less than £394.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be £15.00.

2. From April 2014, Restrict the maximum council tax support award to the top of Council Tax band D

That Paragraph 57 in Part 6 of the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 shall be taken to read as follows:

“57.

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (5), the amount of a person’s maximum council tax benefit in respect of a day for which he is liable to pay council tax, shall be 100 per cent of the amount A/B where—
 - (a) A is the amount set by the appropriate authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act; and
 - (b) B is the number of days in that financial year, less any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made under regulation 58 (non-dependant deductions).
- (2) In calculating a person’s maximum council tax benefit any reduction in the amount that person is liable to pay in respect of council tax, which is made in consequence of any enactment in, or made under, the 1992 Act, shall be taken into account.

- (3) The level of any Council Tax Support awarded shall be restricted to the level of band D
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a claimant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling in which he is resident with one or more other persons but excepting any person so residing with the claimant who is a student to whom regulation 45(2) (students who are excluded from entitlement to council tax benefit) applies, in determining the maximum council tax benefit in his case in accordance with paragraph (1), the amount A shall be divided by the number of persons who are jointly and severally liable for that tax.
- (5) Where a claimant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling with only his partner, paragraph (4) shall not apply in his case.

Applications for Council Tax Support

This part applies to both pensioners and working-age applicants

The following procedure is in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, referred to as 'the Regulations' below and shall be implemented in accordance with those Regulations.

Entitlement to CTS is dependent on an application being made in the following way:

An application may be made:

- (a) In writing
- (b) By means of an electronic communication or
- (c) By telephone following publication by the Council of a number for this purpose.

The form provided by the Council for this purpose must be properly completed, and the Council may require the applicant to complete the form in the proper manner, and may further require that further information and evidence is provided by the applicant.

An application will be defective if the applicant does not provide all of the information the Council requires.

Applications made by telephone will only be valid if the applicant provides a written statement of their circumstances in the format required by the Council.

The Council will provide applicants making their applications with an opportunity to correct any defects in their application.

Applications may be made by those persons set out in paragraph 6 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

The Government has indicated that they intend to introduce legislation to the effect that people entitled to Council Tax Benefit on 31 March 2013 will be deemed to have made an application under the new scheme.

Evidence and information

Any person who makes an application or any person to whom a reduction under the Council's scheme has been awarded shall furnish such certificates, documents, information and evidence in connection with the application or award, or question arising out of it as may reasonably be required by the Council in order to determine the person's entitlement. Where the Council requests information it shall inform the applicant or person of their duty to notify the Council of any change of circumstances and shall indicate the kind of changes of circumstances which are to be notified.

Matters related to the electronic communication of information, proof of delivery and content of information will be determined in accordance with Part 4 of Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

Where the person is a pensioner paragraph 7(4) (5) (6) and (7) of Schedule 8 of the Regulations apply which specify matters relevant to evidence and information related to pensioners.

Amendment and withdrawal of applications

Any person who has made an application may amend it at any time before a decision had been made by serving a notice in writing to the Council in accordance with paragraph 8 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Decisions by the Council

The Council will make a decision in respect of any application for a reduction under this scheme in accordance with the criteria set out within the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 (subject to the amendments made to paragraphs 57 and 58 and Schedule 2 referred to above), and in accordance with Schedules 7 and 8 of the Regulations.

The decision will be made within 14 days of the Council receiving at its designated office the properly completed application or the information requested to complete it or the evidence required. The date upon which the Council is deemed to have received the properly completed application shall be determined in accordance with paragraphs 6 of Schedule 1, paragraph 7 and Part 1 of Schedule 7 of the Regulations being satisfied, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

The Council will notify the applicant or any person affected by its decision under the scheme in writing forthwith, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any person affected to whom the Council sends or delivers a notification of a decision to may, within one month of the notification of the decision, request in

writing from the Council a statement setting out the reasons for its decision on any matter set out in the notice.

Following receipt of a request for a written statement the Council will provide this within 14 days or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

Where an award or payment of reduction is made the time and manner of granting the reduction under the scheme will be in accordance with Part 5 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Change of circumstances

For persons who are not pensioners the date on which changes of circumstances are to take effect will be determined in accordance with paragraph 4 of Part 2 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Procedure for making an appeal

Any applicant who is not in agreement with the decision of the Council taken under this scheme may service a notice in writing on the Council setting out their reasons and grounds upon which they believe the Council has made the wrong decision.

Following receipt of an appeal in writing the Council will:

- (1) Consider the appeal
- (2) Notify the applicant in writing of the following:
 - (i) Any decision not to uphold the appeal and the reasons for that; or
 - (ii) That steps are being taken to proceed with the appeal and set out what steps.

Where an applicant remains dissatisfied following receipt of any written notice sent by the Council in response to their appeal, they may within two months of the service of that notice, appeal to the valuation tribunal.

Applications for further discretionary reductions

Under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, the Authority will consider applications for a further reduction in Council Tax.

There will be financial implications in that the cost of any reduction will be a direct cost to the Council. The cost of any discretionary reduction will, therefore, have to be met by the rest of the council taxpayers.

Applications must be made in writing or by prescribed electronic communications.

The Council will, in making decisions for further discretionary reductions, have due regard to its duties under The Child Poverty Act 2010, The Housing Act 1996, and The Equality Act 2010.

The Council will review all relevant matters when deciding whether to award a reduction including, but not limited to:

- The circumstances of any other person with whom the applicant is jointly and severally liable for Council Tax.
- The overall financial situation of the applicant and the applicant's family.
- The effect the council believes making an award will have on the applicant and any members of the applicant's family.
- Protecting the public purse and maintaining financial budgets.

A person who applies for a discretionary reduction may request that the Council review its decision. Any such request must be made in writing and be received within one month of the date the notification of the decision.

If practicable, another more senior officer, will reconsider the decision in light of all available evidence and, if appropriate amend it. Any change may lead to either a reduction or an increase in any award.

A further right of review will be available against the decision as reviewed which will be considered by a manager but only against the legality of the decision and not the actual outcome.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING EQUALITY ANALYSIS

INTRODUCING A LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME FOR APRIL 2013

SCOPE OF PROPOSAL

1. What is the scope and intended outcomes of the activity being assessed; in terms of both the Council's organisation and staffing, and services to the community?

As part of the 2010 spending review, the Government announced that it would localise support for Council Tax from April 2013 with an expectation that expenditure would be reduced by 10% from the same date. As well as the 10% savings previously outlined, any increase during the year of the number of awards made above the additional increase forecast by DCLG would have to be funded by the Council. Any new scheme must be in place by 31st January 2013.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have published 'Localising Support for Council Tax' Guidance setting out the principles that have to be adhered to in designing a new local scheme.

1 (a) Organisation and Staffing

The council currently administers the Council Tax Benefit scheme on behalf of central government. From April 2013 the department responsible for administering the scheme will take on the role of delivering the new local support scheme. Staff at present engaged in administering and delivering the current Council Tax Benefit scheme will assume responsibility for delivering the replacement scheme.

1 (b) Services to the Community

DCLG has made it clear that the new scheme must protect pensioners fully at the current rates of benefit and that full consideration needs to be given to disabled people and other vulnerable groups.

As outlined in the DCLG's Guidance '[Localising Support for Council Tax - Vulnerable people – key local authority duties](#)', which was published on 21 May 2012, the local scheme needs to pay due regard to the following duties:

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (*and The Equality Act 2010*): requiring local authorities to have clearly defined responsibilities in relation to, and awareness of, those in the most vulnerable situations. This means that a local authority must pay due regard and consider how the scheme might affect people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Each of the eight options is considered in this Equality Analysis (EA).

- The duty to mitigate effects of child poverty (*The Child Poverty Act 2010*): understanding the characteristics of low income and disadvantaged families. The omission of child benefit income in the calculation of local Council Tax support goes some way to protecting children and again additional money from a discretionary fund could also help with this.
- The duty to prevent homelessness (The Housing Act 1996): Those households who find themselves homeless through no fault of their own and who are eligible and in priority need are owed the main homelessness duty.
- Armed Forces covenant: The current provision to fully disregard income received from the War Pension Scheme (£35,165 based on 2011/12 Subsidy expenditure) and Armed Forces Compensation scheme will remain in place in all of our proposed schemes.

While DCLG does not instruct local authorities what they must do in their schemes to be compliant with their duties, it requires authorities to consider the impact of their schemes on all protected characteristics, particularly on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

PEOPLE AFFECTED

2. Which individuals and groups are likely to be affected by the activity?

2 (a) Staff Individuals and Groups

Internally, the impact on staff administering the new scheme will be restricted to requirements for retraining and transitioning into the new role. For the Council as a whole, there will be a requirement for information on the new scheme to be shared widely to ensure they are able to provide residents with details of the new scheme and how it will work.

As over 70% of Havering Council staff live locally, those who are local residents will be impacted both as taxpayers and as potential recipients of support under the current scheme. The potential impact on staff members living locally is further explored under the Community sections of the Equality Analysis.

2 (b) Community Individuals and Groups (*including voluntary organisations*)

The new scheme requires us to identify cost savings to account for the reduced funding from central government. There are a number of options to be considered by Cabinet, and these will have a differential impact on the community dependant on the options adopted.

The profile of Council Tax payers will reflect the [Havering community profile](#). However, the profile of households in receipt of Council Tax support differs from the wider [Havering community profile](#). This is a consequence of the nature of the support scheme, which provides help for Council Tax payers whose financial circumstances are not adequate to cover the charge. Therefore those households with larger outgoings, such as disabled households or families with children, and those households who are not working or are in low paid employment will be overrepresented within the benefits

caseload. The profile of the current Council Tax Benefit caseload is detailed with section 3 (b).

We have identified 8 potential options for the design of the new scheme. A glossary of the terms used with the options can be found within Appendix C of the Localisation of Council Tax Support report to Cabinet 11 July 2012:

1. Absorb the 10% reduction into the council's financial reserves over Year 1 and/or year 2 of the new scheme (reverting to the default scheme)
2. Restrict council tax liability across each band to 80% for working age claimants in order to make 10% reduction
3. Calculate CTB entitlement and then reduce every working age claimant's award by 18%
4. Maximum award would be restricted to an average band D award, increase benefits taper to 65%, premiums set at 2011 rates and increase non-dependant deductions
5. Maximum award would be restricted to an average band D award, Remove second adult rebate, increase benefits taper to 30% and increase non-dependant deductions
6. Increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013
7. Pass on the 10% reduction by increasing the council tax charge for every taxpayer by £22 per year
8. Restrict the maximum council tax support award to the top of band D, increase non-dependant deductions and increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013

A detailed analysis of the options is contained within the tables in section 5 (b), where we examine to potential impact of each option on people with protected characteristics.

DATA AND INFORMATION

3. **What data/information do you have about the people with 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation) or other socio-economic disadvantage (e.g. disabled and part-time workers, low income and/or lone parents (mothers and fathers), looked-after children, other vulnerable children, families and adults) among these individuals and groups? What information do you have about how they will be affected by the activity? Will you be seeking further information in order to assess the equalities impact of the activity? How is this information being used to influence decisions on the activity?**

3 (a) Staff

Over 70% of Havering Council employees live locally so they are taxpayers and/or potential recipients of support under the current scheme. Staff members who are local residents are part of the Council Tax data breakdown in 3 (b).

3 (b) Community

There are almost 100,000 Council tax payers in Havering. As of May 2012, the current full working age caseload totals 10,313 claimants of which 6,954 are non working & 3,359 are working claimants.

A breakdown of the ethnicity of current claimants is as follows:

White: British	81.7%
White: Irish	2.1%
White: Any Other	4.0%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	1.4%
Mixed: White & Black African	0.4%
Mixed: White and Asian	0.2%
Mixed: Any Other	0.5%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	1.4%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0.6%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.5%
Asian/Asian British: Any Other	0.1%
Black/Black British: Caribbean	2.1%
Black/Black British: African	3.2%
Black/Black British: Any Other	0.4%
Any Other	0.4%
Asian/Other	0.4%
Chinese	0.1%
Other Ethnic Group	0.5%

An analysis has been undertaken of the number and claim type of those affected by each of the options 2-8 (option 1 has no impact on the community as the system will not change to that provided under the current Council Tax Benefit provisions). The Council Tax Benefit data extracted is detailed overleaf:

Groups affected under Option 2

Claim Category	Total No. of affected Working Age claims	No. claims affected by Band		LA Saving/ Customer Loss £	Overall % Saving
Disabled (includes Blind, Disabled, Severely Disabled & Employment Support Allowance cases).	2253	A to C	1756	£430K	2.3%
		D	387		
		E	85		
		F	18		
		G	7		
Lone Parents Child Under 5 (includes single claimants who have one or more children under 5 years)	1685	A to C	1263	£276,012	1.5%
		D	366		
		E	52		
		F	3		
		G	1		
Working 16hrs+ (includes all claimants & partner who are not in any of the above categories and who are working a combined 16hrs or more).	1884	A to C	1756	£827,428	4.4%
		D	387		
		E	85		
		F	18		
		G	7		
Everyone Else (includes the remainder who do not fit into any of the above 3 categories).	4491	A to C	3427	£1.8 million	9.8%
		D	837		
		E	176		
		F	32		
		G	8		
Totals	10313	A to C	7650	£1.9million	10%
		D	2137		
		E	430		
		F	79		
		G	17		

Groups affected under Option 3

Claim Category	Total No. of affected Working Age claims	No. claims affected by Band		LA Saving/ Customer Loss £	Overall % Saving
Disabled (includes Blind, Disabled, Severely Disabled & Employment Support Allowance cases).	2253	A to C	1756	£430K	2.3%
		D	387		
		E	85		
		F	18		
		G	7		
Lone Parents Child Under 5 (includes single claimants who have one or more children under 5 years)	1685	A to C	1263	£276,012	1.5%
		D	366		
		E	52		
		F	3		
		G	1		
Working 16hrs+ (includes all claimants & partner who are not in any of the above categories and who are working a combined 16hrs or more).	1884	A to C	1756	£827,428	4.4%
		D	387		
		E	85		
		F	18		
		G	7		
Everyone Else (includes the remainder who do not fit into any of the above 3 categories).	4491	A to C	3427	£1.8 million	9.8%
		D	837		
		E	176		
		F	32		
		G	8		
Totals	10313	A to C	7650	£1.9million	10%
		D	2137		
		E	430		
		F	79		
		G	17		

Groups affected under Option 4

Description	Numbers Affected	No. cases All CTB lost	Annual LA Saving/Customer Loss £	Overall % Saving
1.Restriction to average Band D Benefit Award (£20.57) NB. Actual Band D Liability 2012/13 £28.94.	All Working Age: Band A 1512 Band B 2652 Band C 3648 Band D 2265 Band E 467 Band F 85 Band G 15	15 lose all CTB across all Bands	Total £729,352 A £0.00 B £28,353 C £181,116 D £284,076 E £166,192 F £65,652 G £15,080	4%
2.Increase Non Dependant Deductions: £0.00 to £0.00* £2.85 to £15.00 £5.70 to £20.00 £7.20 to £28.00 £8.60 to £35.00	1113	623	£479,636	3%
3.Increase Tapers (currently 20%) (a) 65% (as HB)	All Working Age caseload 10313	1362	£838,760	4%
Total for option 6 combinations when entered into CLG tool			£1.8 million	10%

*Under the current benefit rules, non-dependant deductions are based on the gross income of the non-dependant. However, where the non-dependant is in receipt of and out-of-work benefit, the deduction remains at zero in line with the current scheme.

Groups affected under Option 5

Description	Numbers Affected	No. cases All CTB lost	Annual LA Saving/Customer Loss £	Overall % Saving
1.Restriction to average Band D Benefit Award (£20.57) NB. Actual Band D Liability 2012/13 £28.94	All Working Age: Band A 1512 Band B 2652 Band C 3648 Band D 2265 Band E 467 Band F 85 Band G 15	15 lose all CTB across all Bands	Total £729,482 A £0.00 B £28,366 C £181,116 D £284,076 E £166,192 F £65,652 G £15,080	4%
2. Increase Non dependant deductions: £2.85 to £6.00 £5.70 to £9.00 £7.20 to £15.00 £8.60 to £20.00	1113	108	£210,704	1%
3.Increase Tapers (currently 20%) 30%	All Working Age caseload 10313	550	£377,000	2%
4. Reduce 2011 Premiums by: (a) 18%	10313	1362	£664,508	3.5%
Total for option 7 combinations when entered into CLG tool			£1.8 million	10%

Groups affected under Option 6

Category	Current Reduction	Proposed Reduction	No of Properties Qualifying in 2011/12	Value in 2011/12 of Exemption or Discount (inc. GLA precept)	Potential Additional Income From Changes (based on 98.00% collection)
Second Homes	Discretionary discount between 10% and 50% Havering currently give 10%	Range of discretion to be between 0% and 50%.	716	£46,798 (10% discount)	£46k if set at 0%
Exemption Class A – empty and undergoing major repairs/structural alterations	100% up to a maximum of 12 months	Discretionary discount between 0% -100% and flexibility to reduce the period for which the discount applies	317	£177,794	12-month period: £0k if set at 100% £44k if set at 75% £87k if set at 50% £131k if set at 25% £174k if set at 0%
Exemption Class C – unoccupied and unfurnished	100% up to a maximum of 6 months	Discretionary discount between 0% and 100% and flexibility to reduce the period for which the discount applies	5712	£1,293,903	6-month period: £0k if set at 100% £317k if set at 75% £634k if set at 50% £951k if set at 25% £1,268k if set at 0%
					£555k if set at 75% £793k if set at 50% £1,030k if set at 25% £1,268k if set at 0%

Category	Current Reduction	Proposed Reduction	No of Properties Qualifying in 2011/12	Value in 2011/12 of Exemption or Discount (inc. GLA precept)	Potential Additional Income From Changes (based on 98.00% collection)
					<i>(assumed 75% occupied within 3 months so additional savings only generated by remaining 25%)</i>
Long term unoccupied and unfurnished (after expiry of 6 months class C exemption)	Discretionary discount between 0% and 50% Havering currently give 0%	Discretion to charge an Empty Homes Premium of up to 50% (i.e. charge 150%) on properties unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 2 years.	464	None – no discount awarded	£295k if set at 150%*
Mortgagees in Possession - Class L	100% with no time limit	Class L to be abolished	78	£42,207	£41k
Total additional revenue					£1.824k

Groups affected under Option 7:

Please note the second table, Option 7a, reflects the current scheme for comparison. Option 7b below is a variation of Option 7 making a saving of only £1 million but can be used in combination with elements from other options.

Option 7 - 1.27% increase. Covers the £1.9m shortfall in CTS but no allowance for increased CTS payable due to the increase in Council Tax liability										
Proposed Council Tax Amounts to raise additional £1.9m (gross & rounded up)										
Band	@	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Amount of Council Tax	£845.00	£1,014.00	£1,183.00	£1,352.00	£1,521.00	£1,859.00	£2,197.00	£2,535.00	£3,042.00	
No. of Props per CTB1*	3.60	2,871.70	6,647.70	20,003.10	31,542.00	16,852.90	8,421.50	4,737.50	513.00	91,593.00
Debit raised	£3,042.00	£2,911,903.80	£7,864,229.10	£27,044,191.20	£47,975,382.00	£31,329,541.10	£18,502,035.50	£12,009,562.50	£1,560,546.00	£149,197,391.20
Annual increase for Tax Payer	£10.61	£12.73	£14.86	£16.98	£19.10	£23.34	£27.59	£31.83	£38.20	£1,873,550.41

Option 7a- no increase. The 10% reduction in Council Tax Support (£1.8m) would have to be met from elsewhere e.g. reserves										
Current Council Tax Amounts										
Band	@	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Amount of Council Tax	£834.39	£1,001.27	£1,168.14	£1,335.02	£1,501.90	£1,835.66	£2,169.41	£2,503.17	£3,003.80	
No. of Props per CTB1*	3.60	2,871.70	6,647.70	20,003.10	31,542.00	16,852.90	8,421.50	4,737.50	513.00	91,593.00
Debit raised	£3,003.80	£2,875,337.49	£7,765,473.82	£26,704,583.01	£47,372,929.80	£30,936,119.51	£18,269,695.67	£11,858,752.08	£1,540,949.40	£147,323,840.79

Option 7b - 0.74% increase. Covers £1.0m of the £1.8m shortfall in CTS but no allowance for increased CTS payable due to the increase in Council Tax liability										
Proposed Council Tax Amounts to raise additional £1.0m (gross & rounded down)										
Band	@	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Amount of Council Tax	£845.00	£1,014.00	£1,183.00	£1,352.00	£1,521.00	£1,859.00	£2,197.00	£2,535.00	£3,042.00	
No. of Props per CTB1*	3.60	2,871.70	6,647.70	20,003.10	31,542.00	16,852.90	8,421.50	4,737.50	513.00	91,593.00
Debit raised	£3,042.00	£2,911,903.80	£7,864,229.10	£27,044,191.20	£47,975,382.00	£31,329,541.10	£18,502,035.50	£12,009,562.50	£1,560,546.00	£149,197,391.20
Annual increase for Tax Payer	£10.61	£12.73	£14.86	£16.98	£19.10	£23.34	£27.59	£31.83	£38.20	£1,873,550.41

Groups affected under option 8

Option 8 Case Studies		
a) Single Disabled person. Income £147.41 Band A		
	Weekly CTB	Annual CTB
Current Assessment	£12.00	£624.00
Band A No non dependant deduction	£12.00	£624.00
CTB Reduction	£0.00 No Change	£0.00 No Change
b) Lone Parent, Income £236.87, 1 child, 1 non dependant (gross income greater than £394.00 per week). Band D		
	Weekly CTB	Annual CTB
Current Assessment	£20.18	£1049.36
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band D Increased non dependant deduction £8.60 to £20.00 	£8.78	£456.56
CTB Reduction	£11.40	£592.80
c) Working Couple, Income £151.85, 1 non dependant (gross income greater than £394.00 per week). Band D		
	Weekly CTB	Annual CTB
Current Assessment	£16.42	£853.84
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band D Increased non dependant deduction £8.60 to £20.00 	£8.78	£456.56
CTB Reduction	£7.64	£397.28
d) Lone Parent, Income Support, no non dependants, Band F.		
	Weekly CTB	Annual CTB
Current Assessment	£41.58	£2162.16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band F(Restricted to Band D) No non dependants 	£28.94	£1504.88
CTB Reduction	£12.64	£657.28
e) Lone Parent, Income Support, 1 non dependant (gross income £316.00 to £394.00 per week, Band F		
	Weekly CTB	Annual CTB
Current assessment	£34.38	£1787.76

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band F (Restricted to Band D) • Increased non dependant deduction £7.20 to £15.00 	£13.94	£724.88
CTB Reduction	£20.44	£1062.88

Examples a) to c) show only the impact of the non dependant changes. Such cases are unaffected by the restriction to Band D.

Example d) shows the impact of a restriction to Band D upon a Band F property banding, while example e) shows the impact of such a restriction when there is also a non dependant living in the household.

Currently, there is no Council Tax data breakdown on the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment/identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

We will be undertaking an extensive consultation of Havering residents to canvas their views on the final design of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. As part of this process we will ask responders to complete a Corporate Equal Opportunities Monitoring form that will assist in informing Cabinet of the wider impact when they come to ratify the scheme.

CONSULTATION

4. If no data and information is available about the groups likely to be affected by the activity, how would you inform your EA? Will you be considering carrying out some consultation to inform your EA?

The Council will be required to consult on its proposed scheme with the public and preceptors. Staff who live within the borough will be targeted through an internal consultation. Any new scheme must be in place by 31st January 2013.

Once Cabinet have approved the draft final scheme, a consultation document will be prepared that will allow residents to comment on the draft final scheme. This will include case studies to help residents make informed decisions. Part of this consultation document will be monitoring through the completion of the Corporate Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form to identify the characteristics of the respondents.

We are also looking at whether it would be more cost effective to engage an external organisation to undertake the consultation on behalf of the Council and to collate and analyse responses.

4 (a) Staff

We will be attending staff meetings across the Council during the consultation process to advise staff members of the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support scheme and other potential changes to Council Tax, and how they will impact on their work

areas. These meetings will include an opportunity to comment on the design of the scheme.

Those staff members who are local residents will also be invited to participate in the wider community consultation process.

4 (b) Community

The questionnaire will be drafted in partnership with the Communications team to ensure that it is understandable and accessible, ensuring clarity for residents. Translation and Interpreting Services (TIS) will be available to residents upon request.

The consultation process has initially been planned as an online exercise whereby residents will be able to take part by visiting the Havering website. Consideration is also being given to alternative/additional methods of consultation such as telephone sampling, face to face interviews with a sample of residents and paper copies of the consultation document available in customer facing areas.

During the consultation process we will also meet with representatives from Havering community groups, social landlords and voluntary organisations to separately canvas their thoughts on the options put forward for consultation.

The draft scheme will be updated to reflect residents' feedback from the consultation and any gaps/actions identified from the EA.

LIKELY IMPACT

5. Based on the collected data and information, what will be the likely impact of the activity on individuals and groups with protected characteristics or other socio-economic disadvantage?

5 (a) Staff

Internally, the impact on staff administering the new scheme will be restricted to requirements for retraining and transitioning into the new role. For the Council as a whole, there will be a requirement for information on the new scheme to be shared widely to ensure they are able to provide residents with details of the new scheme and how it will work.

As over 70% of Havering Council staff live locally, those who are local residents will be impacted both as taxpayers and as potential recipients of support under the current scheme. The potential impact on staff members living locally is further explored under 5 (b).

5 (b) Community

To undertake an analysis on the impact on the protected characteristics and sub-groups, we have first examined the community data we currently hold. For example for

option 2 (see tables overleaf), disabled people contributed 23% of the total saving, but are only 17.5% of the overall population. Therefore this has been recorded as having a higher impact on this group than would have been expected from the community profile. For the same option, 20% of the savings come from working age claimants. Based on the lower youth employment rates, this is more likely to represent older households (30-64) who make up 46% of the population and therefore there is no impact related to age.

In the case of the Council Tax Benefit (CTB) data, we have looked at how the savings from each option are distributed between disabled households, working households, lone parent households and others and then compared the distribution within [Havering's community profile](#). Where a client group are identified as contributing a higher percentage of the savings than their proportion within the community this is recorded as an adverse impact.

Some of the protected characteristics that we know are more likely to be adversely affected are as follows:

Age – We have identified the number of working households affected. Youth unemployment is at a higher rate than that of the general population, therefore the more working households impacted the older the profile of applicants affected.

Disability – Disabled households are those where a state disability related benefit is in payment. We recognise that disabled people are historically disadvantaged and face greater barriers when accessing (information about) services and therefore consider disabled households to be more vulnerable than other households.

Gender - The data extracted shows the number of lone parent households affected; as lone parents are predominantly female the impact on women is considered to be disproportionately higher than the impact on men.

Socio-economic disadvantage – The Council Tax Benefit scheme is a means tested benefit available to households on a low income. Therefore all recipients would be considered to be at a socio-economic disadvantage, particularly lone parents (most likely to be women), part-time workers (most likely to be women), working-age couples on low income, large households (more likely to be from BME backgrounds) and carers (most likely to be women).

Other protected characteristics - Currently, there is no Council Tax data breakdown on the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment/identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

Where we currently do not hold quantitative data, we have used wider empirical evidence available from sources such as the Department for Communities and Local Government¹. For example, for option 5, 30% of the savings are derived from increased non-dependant deductions. Empirical evidence suggests that culturally BME families are more likely to have larger households containing older working children. As

¹ For example see: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/138814.pdf>

Havering has a BME population of 11% it is likely that they will be disproportionately impacted by this measure (+19%).

In the case of Council Tax data, the savings are distributed by households and property size and second properties. Using empirical evidence as to the characteristics of larger households we have extrapolated that there is a disproportionate impact on households more likely to live in larger properties and/or have larger households.

The impact of each of the options on the protected characteristics is highlighted in the table overleaf. When considering the impact, the tables highlight effects that are a consequence of the change from the **current** Council Tax and/or Council Tax Benefit scheme. Historic differential impacts on the protected groups that are inherent in the current Council Tax and Council Tax Benefit arrangements have not been addressed.

Table: Impact of proposed Council Tax Options on protected characteristics and sub-groups

Protected characteristics	Option 1
	Option 1: Absorb the 10% reduction into the council's financial reserves over Year 1 and/or year 2 of the new scheme. In effect the new Local Council Tax Support scheme duplicates the current Council Tax Benefit scheme.
Age	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Disability	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Gender	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Race/ethnicity	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Religion or belief	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Sexual orientation	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme
Socio-economic Groups	There is no adverse impact as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme

If this is the agreed option a separate EA will be undertaken to assess the impact on potential organisational changes and staffing restructures

Protected characteristics	Option 2
	Option 2: Restrict council tax liability across each band to 80% for working age claimants in order to make 10% reduction. Council Tax properties in bands A to H are all subject to 20% liability reduction for working age claimants prior to the calculation of any entitlement to support. Pensioners are protected and the level of support calculated using 100% liability. Local Council Tax Support is calculated in the same way as the current CTB scheme except for the liability reduction.
Age	As per the provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Local Government Finance Bill, people of working age will be disproportionately affected compared to people from other age groups (people of pensioner age).
Disability	There is a slightly disproportionate impact on disabled households (providing 23% of the savings although only 17.5% of the number of households). This is partly because in order to meet their specific needs disabled households tend to require larger properties (attracting a higher banding). Hence, disabled households are more likely to be affected due to the higher base.
Gender	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	Evidence suggests that some BME communities have a cultural tradition for living in multi-generational households and tend to reside in larger properties. Due to the higher tax base these properties attract, some BME families are more likely to be affected by this option.
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	Potentially, older working age households and households with children are more likely to be affected by this proposal. Households with children are more likely to live in larger properties, while older households will tend to live in larger/more expensive properties as they will have carers and/or older children requiring their own rooms, or whose children have left the property but they have not yet moved/downsized to a smaller property.

Protected characteristics	Option 3
	<p>Option 3: Calculate CTB entitlement and then reduce every working age claimant's award by 18%.</p> <p>The savings required will be achieved by reducing the amount of support the household is entitled to under the Local Council Tax Support scheme by an agreed percentage after the benefit calculation has been made.</p>
Age	As per the provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Local Government Finance Bill, people of working age will be disproportionately affected compared to people from other age groups (people of pensioner age).
Disability	There is a slightly disproportionate impact on disabled households (providing 23% of the savings although only 17.5% of the number of households). This is partly because in order to meet their specific needs disabled households tend to require larger properties (attracting a higher banding). Hence, disabled households are more likely to be affected due to the higher base.
Gender	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	Evidence suggests that some BME communities have a cultural tradition for living in multi-generational households and tend to reside in larger properties. Due to the higher tax base these properties attract, some BME families are more likely to be affected by this option.
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	Potentially, older working age households and households with children are more likely to be affected by this proposal. Households with children are more likely to live in larger properties, while older households will tend to live in larger/more expensive properties as they will have carers and/or older children requiring their own rooms, or whose children have left the property but they have not yet moved/downsized to a smaller property.

Protected characteristics	Option 4
	<p>Option 4: Maximum award would be restricted to an average B and D award. Increase benefits taper to 65%. Premiums set at 2011 rates. Increase non-dependant deductions as follows: £0.00 to £00.00 * £2.85 to £15.00 £5.70 to £20.00 £7.20 to £28.00 £8.60 to £35.00 Remove second adult rebate.</p> <p>A more complex calculation is required for this option as changes have been made to the actual support calculation. The income taper (the amount of earned income taken into account) is brought in line with the proposed Universal Credit and Housing benefit calculation, increasing from 20% to 65%.</p>
Age	Both young and older people are potentially disproportionately impacted by this option, but for different reasons; Older families are more likely either to have grown-up children within their household or are more likely to have other adults living with them on a non-commercial basis to offset household costs (second adults, carers). Young people are more likely to be non-dependants and therefore will be expected to make a greater contribution to the Council Tax, although they have earning levels below other working groups.
Disability	Some disabled households might be negatively impacted because due to their type/level of disability they require larger properties that fall within E to H, while their level of support is restricted to B and D levels.
Gender	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	As with option 2, BME communities that have a cultural tradition for living in multi-generational households are more likely to be

	negatively impacted by this option as they tend to reside in larger (higher banded) properties and/or with older working non-dependants within the household.
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	Very high non-dependant increases will penalise a very small group of older working age claimants (such as claimants with adult children in the household) who would disproportionately lose any Council Tax support, including those receiving Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance.

Protected characteristics	Option 5
	<p>Option 5: Maximum award would be restricted to an average B and D award.</p> <p>Remove second adult rebate.</p> <p>Increase benefits taper to 30%.</p> <p>Increase non-dependant deductions:</p> <p>£00.0 to £00.0</p> <p>£2.85 to £6.00</p> <p>£5.70 to £9.00</p> <p>£7.20 to £15.00</p> <p>£8.60 to £20.00</p> <p>Reduce premiums by 18%.</p> <p>In work claimants will receive less support because the taper applies to the earned income (although the taper is less than that proposed in option 4). It will be easier to collect the Council Tax from claimants in work</p>
Age	As with option 4, both young and old are potentially impacted by this option. Again older families are more likely either to have grown-up children within their household or are more likely or to have other adults living with them on a non-commercial basis to offset household costs. Young people are more likely to be non-dependants and therefore be expected to make a greater contribution to the Council Tax, although they have earning levels below other working people
Disability	As with option 4, there is a small possibility that some disabled households will be impacted as a consequence of needing larger properties that fall within band E to H, having their level of support restricted to B and D levels.
Gender	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	As with option 4, families that have a cultural tradition for living in multi-generational households will more likely be impacted, both as they tend reside in larger (higher banded) properties and with older working children within the household.
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate that sexual orientation is a factor impacted by this option

Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	As highlighted within the impact on Age, young people are more likely to be non-dependants and therefore be expected to make a greater contribution to the Council Tax, although they have earning levels below other working people

Protected characteristics	Option 6
	<p>Option 6: Increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013.</p> <p>The Local Government Finance Act, expected to receive royal assent in November 2012, will allow local authorities to reduce the level of support.</p> <p>This option has no impact on claimants. It also has no impact on the majority of taxpayers with one home. It could assist bring properties into use and occupation in line with new homes agenda.</p>
Age	Older households are more likely to be affected by this option. However, households that have additional property targeted under these measures are proportionally likely to be more prosperous older households.
Disability	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.

Protected characteristics	Option 7
	<p>Option 7: Pass on the 10% reduction by increasing the council tax charge for every taxpayer by £22 per year.</p> <p>Local authorities could choose to manage the reduction using flexibility over Council Tax. However, significant increases in Council Tax could trigger a referendum, which would have its own considerations.</p>
Age	<p>With reference to the Havering Population Profile, over 60% of residents (16-64 years old) are of working age. This means that working age residents are more likely to be disproportionately affected. A further 18% of the population aged 65 year and above will be affected by this option. The remaining population is made up of children.</p>
Disability	<p>Disabled people including older people with long-term illnesses will be affected by this option but low income disabled and/or older people in receipt of council tax support would have their entitlement recalculated to take account of the increase in council tax.</p>
Gender	<p>Whilst everyone will be affected, women are more likely to be affected by this option not only because they make up 52% of the Havering population but also because they are more likely to be part-time workers, lone parents and carers. Consequently, their income is lower than the average income and the impact from this option will be much more significant. Where council tax support is in payment, this will be recalculated to take into account the increase in council tax.</p>
Gender reassignment/identity	<p>There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the scheme.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the scheme.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Women are more likely to be affected by this option not only because they may be out of work due to pregnancy or maternity. Evidence also suggests that women are more likely to be lone parents. Consequently, their income is lower than the average income and the impact from this option will be much more significant. Where council tax support is in payment, this will be recalculated to take into account the increase in council tax.</p>
Race/ethnicity	<p>Although everyone will be affected by this option, benefits evidence shows that white and black minority ethnic claimants are more likely to be affected. However, because they are entitled to benefit, their entitlement will be recalculated to take account of the increase in council tax.</p>
Religion or belief	<p>There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this protected characteristic as a consequence of this change to the scheme.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this protected characteristic as a consequence of this change to the scheme.</p>
Socio-economic Groups	<p>Whilst everyone will be affected by this option, it is recognised that certain groups will be more disadvantaged than others,</p>

	<p>particularly disabled people, lone parents (most likely to be women), part-time workers (most likely to be women), working-age couples on low income, large households (more likely to be from BME backgrounds) and carers (most likely to be women). However, those groups who are more likely to be already in receipt of benefit, therefore, their entitlement will be recalculated to take account of the increase in council tax.</p>
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Protected characteristics	Option 8
	<p>Option 8: Restrict the maximum council tax support award to the top of band D, £28.94.</p> <p>Increase non-dependant deductions from:</p> <p>£00.0 to £00.0*</p> <p>£2.85 to £6.00</p> <p>£5.70 to £9.00</p> <p>£7.20 to £15.00</p> <p>£8.60 to £20.00</p> <p>Increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013 as follows:</p> <p>Remove the second homes discount completely (currently 10%).</p> <p>Amending the Class A exemption (Empty and undergoing major structural repairs) to a 25% discount for a maximum of 12 months.</p> <p>Removing the Class C exemption (unoccupied and unfurnished) completely.</p> <p>Taking the savings from the abolition of Class L (mortgagees in possession).</p> <p>This uses a combination of restricting the maximum council tax support to a weekly band D charge of £28.94, non dependant deductions and reductions in property exemptions.</p> <p>All claimants (no more than 15 households in total) residing in properties banded E, F and G are likely to be affected by restricting benefit to B and D Claimants. In total, a very small number, 123 claimants will be affected by this option when compared to the working age benefit caseload of 10,313.</p>
Age	<p>As with option 4 and 5, both young and older people are potentially impacted by this option. Again older families are more likely either to have grown-up children within their household or are more likely to have other adults living with them (e.g. carers) on a non-commercial basis to offset household costs. Young people are more likely to be non-dependants and therefore be expected to make a greater contribution to the Council Tax, although they have earning levels below other working people</p>
Disability	<p>As with option 4 and 5, there is a small possibility that some disabled households will be impacted as a consequence of needing larger properties that fall within band E to H, having their level of support restricted to B and D levels.</p>
Gender	<p>There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.</p>

Gender reassignment/identity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Pregnancy and maternity	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Race/ethnicity	As with option 4 and 5, families that have a cultural tradition for living in multi-generational households will more likely be impacted, both as they tend reside in larger (higher banded) properties and with older working children within the household
Religion or belief	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate there is an adverse impact to this group as a consequence of this change to the benefit scheme.
Socio-economic Groups	As highlighted within the impact on Age, young people are more likely to be non-dependants and therefore be expected to make a greater contribution to the Council Tax, although they have earning levels below other working people.

6. What is the likely impact on arrangements for safeguarding children and/or safeguarding vulnerable adults?

6 (a) Vulnerable children

Households with vulnerable children are more likely to be in receipt of Council Tax Benefit under the current scheme and will continue to receive support under the new arrangements.

The protection offered under the current scheme is to be transferred into the new Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

6 (b) Vulnerable adults

As with vulnerable children, households with vulnerable adults are more likely to be in receipt of Council Tax Benefit under the current scheme and will continue to receive support under the new arrangements.

The protection offered under the current scheme is to be transferred into the new Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION

7. If any negative impact is identified, is there a way of eliminating or minimising it to reasonable level? If not, how can the negative impact be justified?

7 (a) Staff

Please refer to 7 (b).

7 (b) Community

Raising awareness of residents to the forthcoming changes is essential and arrangements are to be put in place to ensure payment options including instalments, direct debits etc are also widely publicised. The scheme will also work closely with debt counselling and financial inclusion provision. We will also make sure that our communication methods and materials are accessible, inclusive and effective. For example, we will include translation strap line on all our consultation and information documents. Translation and Interpreting Services, including alternative formats, will also be provided upon request.

Although some households will be adversely impacted in comparison to current arrangements by some of the proposed changes, the options have been designed to minimise both the number of households affected and the financial impact on these households.

Certain options will be the subject of consultation with the Greater London Council and inform our final decision and new scheme. The draft scheme will be updated to reflect residents' feedback from the consultation and any gaps/actions identified from the EA.

The implementation of the new scheme will be complemented by the launch of a hardship fund for short term support for vulnerable families. Affected households will also be actively supported to move into work and other options will be explored, including support for possible relocation where appropriate.

PROMOTING EQUALITY

8. How will the activity help the Council fulfil its legal duty to advance equality of opportunity in the way services are provided?

8 (a) Staff

Please refer to 8 (b).

8 (b) Community

The new scheme will promote social inclusion and community cohesion by providing financial support to vulnerable and economically disadvantaged groups such as older residents, residents with disabilities, lone parents and families on low incomes.

SPECIFIC NEEDS

9. What actions will you be taking in order to maximise positive impact and minimise negative impact from the activity?

9 (a) Staff

Please refer to 9 (b).

9 (b) Community

Details of the new scheme will be widely publicised to seek to maximise take up by those households entitled to support under the new Local Council Tax Support arrangements. Details of how the scheme will work, including how to access hardship support, will be published on the Havering website and shared with local community organisations.

Raising awareness of residents to the forthcoming changes is essential and arrangements are to be put in place to ensure payment options including instalments, direct debits etc are also widely publicised. The scheme will also work closely with debt counselling and financial inclusion provision. We will also make sure that our communication methods and materials are accessible, inclusive and effective. For example, we will include translation strap line on all our consultation and information

documents. Translation and Interpreting Services, including alternative formats, will also be provided upon request.

Existing networks will be used to promote the information amongst hard to reach groups.

As already outlined in 7(b), it is intended that the new scheme will incorporate a hardship fund to support vulnerable families who are adversely affected by the changes.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

10. Once implemented, how often do you intend to monitor the actual impact of the activity?

10 (a) Staff

Please refer to 10 (b)

10 (b) Community

The draft scheme will be updated to reflect residents' feedback from the consultation and any gaps/actions identified from the EA.

Formal monitoring and review arrangements will be incorporated within the design of the new scheme.

Individual households will have access to formal appeal and review arrangements should they have complaints or concerns about the assessment criteria and method used to identify the Council Tax support they need.

Performance and quality checking systems will be core to the design of the scheme. The performance data collated, including satisfaction surveys and community profile monitoring will form part of regular reporting arrangements to senior management and members.

SIGN OFF AND PUBLICATION

11. When completed, the Equality Analysis needs to be signed off by the Head of Service. Once signed off, it should be forwarded to the Directorate Equality Analysis Web administrator to publish it on the council's website.

HEAD OF SERVICE

Name:

Date:

Signature:

REPORT OF THE CABINET

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 to 2014/15 – ELEMENTS OF 2013/14 PROGRAMME FOR APPROVAL IN ADVANCE OF FULL PROGRAMME

The report before Cabinet sought approval of certain key elements of the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme in advance of recommendations on the full programme which would be brought to Cabinet later in the financial year together with the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2013/14.

Early approval of resources for particular elements of the Decent Homes programme, such as window replacements and new kitchens and bathrooms, was sought. A beneficial result of the introduction of HRA self-financing this year and confirmation of future years' Decent Homes Grant, was that the Council is in the position for the first time ever of having a clear view on future housing capital availability without having to rely on the Annual Subsidy Determination. This would typically not be available until late December.

Cabinet noted that forward planning would enable the Council to commit capital resources earlier than previously thought, thus allowing commencement of consultation and negotiation with tenants, leaseholders and contractors before the end of the financial year, ready for expenditure in the first quarter of next year. Previously, approval of the capital programme in February and March, at the earliest, resulted in a lull in capital programme delivery in the first quarter of the financial year while the necessary pre-contract consultation and negotiations were completed. This could place in-year delivery at risk.

Reasons for the decision:

The reasons for seeking approval of certain elements of the 2013/14 HRA Capital Programme now, rather than waiting for full HRA Budget report due in February 2013 were:

1. A section 20 consultation with leaseholders affected, that is the statutory right leaseholders, has to be undertaken for works for which they will be charged, could not commence until budgets have been approved. As it is governed by legislation and can have a direct impact on the choice of contractors and/or specification of works, the section 20 process must be completed prior to the letting of a contract, and can take from one to three months to complete.

The contracts to replace windows in flatted blocks and carry out more substantial works to tower blocks require a section 20 consultation. Approval of these elements of the HRA Capital Programme at this stage will allow the section 20 consultation to be completed before

the beginning of 2013/14, thus allowing work to commence in quarter 1. This overcomes the lull in works otherwise typical in quarter 1

2. Programmes that run across years, for example, kitchen and bathroom replacements, have to date had to halt at year end/year start because resource approval is only given in February / March. It is more cost-effective to let contracts for the following year before year start, although of course, expenditure would not be incurred before year start. This enables contractors to gear up for delivery in quarter 1 and/or keep operatives on-site, and can enable more cost-effective quotes as the risk of stopping the programme in the subsequent year is removed.

Other options considered:

1. To wait until February 2013 to seek Cabinet and Council approval of the 2013/14 HRA Capital Programme – this was rejected because capital resources in the HRA are known now and so to delay *all* elements of the Programme until February would mean that the Council would be continuing to needlessly delay expenditure within the Capital Programme until the second quarter of the next financial year as it has had to do until now.
2. To seek approval now of the *entire* 2013/14 HRA Capital Programme – this was rejected because although there is greater certainty about capital resources for next year, the exact allocation across all the competing priorities within the HRA would be best achieved by aligning the final full programme with the HRA budget setting process. Put simply, the time and financial efficiencies of earlier than usual approval of the programme only applies to those elements considered in this report.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that the following allocation of capital resources within the HRA Capital Programme for 2013/14:

	£'000s in 2013/14
Kitchens	7,900
Windows	1,600
Bathrooms	1,365
Non-traditional houses	1,467
Tower block refurbishment (for New Plymouth and Napier Houses)	600
Tower block works beyond Decent Homes (for New Plymouth and Napier)	900

<i>Houses)</i>	
Planned preventative maintenance	1,500
Total	15,332

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REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME: AMENDMENT – Independent Person for Standards of Members' Conduct

At its meeting in November, the Council appointed the new Independent Person for standards of Members' conduct. The Independent Person is entitled to be paid an allowance for carrying out his duties and it has been agreed that he should be paid a flat rate of £1,000 per annum, by monthly instalments. For 2012/13, this will be a pro rata amount of £337 as payment will be due only for the period 28 November 2012 to 31 March 2013.

To give effect to this arrangement, amendment is required of paragraph 15 of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme, and the Governance Committee now **RECOMMENDS to the Council that that paragraph be amended to read:**

15 Co-Optees and Independent Persons' Allowances

The standard rate of allowance for statutory co-optees is £117 per meeting attended.

The Independent Person for standards of Members' Conduct will be paid an annual allowance of £1,000, in monthly instalments.

Co-optees and Independent Persons will be reimbursed for all travel costs in accordance with the above, whether the travel is within or outside the Borough, but will not be paid subsistence.

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REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

KEY DECISIONS – AMENDMENT OF DEFINITION

The Local Government Act 2000, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, requires that, when decisions that are considered to be “Key” are to be made, particular procedural steps be taken before, when and after they are made. Failure to observe those steps – for example, giving 28 days’ notice of them before they are taken, and allowing time for them to be called in before being implemented – could result in the decisions being challenged and, for example, open to being quashed on judicial review.

There is no statutory definition of what constitutes a “key decision”: each local authority is free to develop its own definition. The Council’s current definition is as follows:

A key decision is an Executive decision which is likely

- (i) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. For this purpose “significant” is defined as
 - (a) In excess of £500,000
 - (b) In excess of 10% of the gross controllable composite budget at Head of Service/ Assistant Chief Executive level (subject to a minimum value of £250,000)

In determining the meaning of “significant”, regard must be had to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State

The term “savings” has not thus far been defined further. This had not resulted in any particular difficulty until changes had recently been made in the law relating to the making of executive decisions, with the explicit aim of ensuring that decision-making by the executives of local authorities was more transparent and more open to public scrutiny. It was now reported that the lack of definition of savings left the Council potentially open to challenge in that, for example, if a decision to dispose of an asset valued in excess of £500,000 were treated as non-key (on the basis that the prospective capital receipt was not a “saving”), it would be open to an aggrieved party to accuse the Council of acting improperly.

The Committee accepted that the meaning of “saving” should now be defined in order to avoid the possibility of such challenges and accordingly now RECOMMENDS to the Council that the note to paragraph (14)(a)(i) of the Council’s Executive Procedure Rules be amended to read:

In determining the meaning of “significant”, regard must be had to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. For the avoidance of doubt, “savings” includes expenditure avoided, additional revenue income generated or capital receipts obtained.

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS - arranging for review by an Overview & Scrutiny Committee

In accordance with requirements of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council's Executive Arrangements provide for the call-in of certain Executive Decisions for review by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC). Generally, unless the next ordinary meeting is imminent, a special meeting of the OSC will need to be called.

A balance is needed between:

- compliance with the legal requirements for convening a meeting
- ensuring that the executive business of the Council can be taken forward without avoidable disruption
- ensuring that the Members who have submitted the requisition have due opportunity to explain the reasons for their requisition and to seek the support of the OSC

In practice, this means that the OSC will generally need to meet either at the end of the week following receipt of the requisition or during the week following that.

The Governance Committee noted that, currently, there is no specific timescale for convening an OSC meeting following receipt of a requisition and that this had, on occasion, led to difficulty. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to include in the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules a requirement that the OSC be convened to meet within 10 working days of the requisition being received, where it is practicable to do so (for example, it might not be practicable to do so over the Christmas/New Year period) unless an ordinary meeting of the OSC is due within 15 working days.

The Committee therefore RECOMMENDS that the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules be adjusted by amending paragraph 17(b) of the Rules to read as follows:

- (b) If the Committee Administration and Member Support Manager is notified of a requisition of a decision shown on that notification within three working days in Calendar Brief (or any supplementary Calendar Brief) of a decision, then that decision shall not be acted upon but shall be submitted to the OSC as soon as possible, either at the next ordinary meeting if due within 15 working days of receipt of the requisition or at a special meeting convened for the purpose (to be held, so far as practicable, within 10 working days of the receipt of the requisition), for determination.

(Amended text highlighted for clarity)

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COUNCIL, 30 JANUARY 2013

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1 PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES: INCOME

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor John Mylod

Income from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) amounted to £2.157 million in 2011/12 compared with £1.602 million in 2010/11, an increase of 35%. Would the Cabinet Member explain the reasons behind this significant increase?

2 VETERANS' CHAMPION

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

Will the Administration support the Labour Group proposal that the Council appoint a 'Veterans Champion' to act as a single point of contact and support for Armed Forces Veterans and Service leavers?

3 RAINHAM LIBRARY - DELAY

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Can this Council inform residents the reasons for the delay in building as promised, the proposed new Rainham Library?

4 TREE REMOVAL POLICY

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm under which criteria of the council's tree policy were the trees in Hornchurch High Street and King George's Playing Fields removed?

5 HOMELESS PEOPLE IN HAVERING

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Paul McGeary

How many people in Havering are currently:

A) Registered as homeless and the Council have a statutory duty to house them; and

B) Rough sleeping?

6 EMPTY ROOMS IN COUNCIL PROPERTIES

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Michael Deon Burton

As one who proudly supports local residents with family members who heed the call of their country, I am deeply concerned upon hearing of plans to penalise people in council housing who leave bedrooms empty for more than 13 weeks.

The results of which I am told will mean households with serving members of the Armed Forces will lose hundreds of pounds.

If this is the ramification of the clumsy construction of the governance, I ask the Executive to give assurance that they will accede to my request 'That we in Havering will take all necessary steps to obviate this most unfair affect upon a most cherished section of our community'.

7 PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES: MISUSE OF PARKING FOR THE DISABLED

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

Of the 47,001 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in 2011/12, would the Cabinet Member disclose how many were for parking in a disabled bay without a legitimate blue badge?

8 GREATER LONDON FIRE STATION CLOSURES AND REDUCTION OF FIRE ENGINES

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoffrey Starns)

By Councillor Denis Breading

What representations do the Administration propose to make to the Commissioner of the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority about his proposals to close 12 Fire

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Stations and reduce the number of fire engines at 7 other Fire Stations, reducing the fire fighting capacity in Greater London significantly?

9 LAND IN WILLOUGHBY DRIVE

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

Why have a family of gypsies been allowed to park and stay on a parcel of council owned land at Willoughby Drive Rainham RM13 7SX?

10 COST OF HORNCHURCH LIVE EVENT

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor John Wood

Would the Cabinet Member disclose the cost of the 2012 Hornchurch Live event against the allocated budget?

11 WARD COUNCILLOR CONSULTATION AND BRIEFING

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Pat Murray

Will the Administration ensure that before specific decisions are made and/or it is decided to put proposals out formally for public consultation which decisions or proposals impact on particular Wards and areas of the Borough, the Ward Councillors for those areas are informally consulted and/or briefed before they are formally announced to the public?

12 PROTECTING COUNCIL ASSETS

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor David Durant

The Town Hall and Mercury House are valuable Council assets.

Therefore is it wise to outsource the Town Hall and Mercury House security staff or is it more prudent to put staff loyalty and the protection of these buildings before the prospect of a small financial gain?

Also is the possible outsourcing of security staff to make savings, beyond that needed to reach departmental targets - and is the process of tendering costing more than the anticipated saving?

13 **DUPLICATE PAYMENTS**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much was paid out in duplicate payments in each of the last three years?

14 **COMPENSATION AWARDED TO CLAIMANTS BY THE COUNCIL AS A RESULT OF POORLY MAINTAINED HIGHWAYS IN HAVERING**

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

What was the total amount of compensation paid by the Council to claimants for each of the past three financial years in respect of claims for personal injury and damage to vehicles caused by poorly maintained highways

15 **MAKING SAVINGS**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Will this Council will now consider all points on how to save and make money, that will benefit the Council Tax paying Residents of Havering?

16 **REMOVAL OF HIGHWAY TREES**

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member advise why there is a reluctance for StreetCare to remove trees from the highway even when there is a long history of damage being done to the footway?

17 **HOMELESS FAMILIES IN BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION IN HAVERING**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

How many homeless families are currently placed in bed and breakfast accommodation and how many of them have been placed in such accommodation for more than six weeks?

18 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY: ABANDONMENT**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

What are the implications for Havering of the recent national Government decision to stop the Regional Spatial Strategy for housing?

19 **INTRODUCTION OF "LIVING WAGE"**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether Havering will be introducing a 'Living Wage' along with other councils and organisations?

20 **SUNSET DRIVE CARAVAN SITE LICENCE**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

Will the Council make urgent representations to the site owner to ensure that it grits the roadways serving the Sunset Drive Mobile Home Site during freezing weather conditions?

21 **CHAFFORD SCHOOL: SIXTH FORM**

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor David Durant

Has the Administration any plans to restore a 6th Form to Chafford school, Rainham - and if not why not?

22 **SPENDING ON RECRUITMENT**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much has been spent on recruitment over each of the last three years in the following two categories:

a) Adverts in newspapers/journals/trade magazines

b) Recruitment Consultants

23 **QUEENS HOSPITAL: HYGIENE**

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

Has the Queens hospital been meeting the required NHS hygiene standards?

24 **ACADEMIES AND FREE SCHOOLS: SEN ADMISSIONS**

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor Gillian Ford

There has recently been national concern over Academy and Free schools discriminating against SEN admissions. Would the Cabinet Member advise this Council if this has become an issue in Havering?

25 **ACCESS TO DVLA DATABASE**

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Nic Dodin

Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether this Council has been denied access to the DVLA database at any time over the past four years?

26 **BINS FOR DOG WASTE**

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member consider installing suitable bins which can be used for dog waste close to areas of green open space in the borough?

27 **SALE OF FORMER GARAGE SITES**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ron Ower

Would the Cabinet Member reveal how much has been raised from the sale of former housing garage sites since 2010?

28 **PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor John Mylod

It was recently reported that 337 councils have set up partnerships between each other to help drive down costs. Would the Leader set out:

- a) How many partnerships have we with other local Councils and which ones?
- b) Details of any savings achieved through these partnerships?
- c) Have we an indication whether they are successful?

29 **STAFF SICKNESS**

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Gillian Ford

Would the Leader set out the average levels of staff sickness over each of the last three years and the cost to the authority respectively?

30 **AGENCY STAFF**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much has been spent on agency staff in each of the last two years broken down by division?

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COUNCIL, 30 JANUARY 2013

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

A CCTV IN RAINHAM

Motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group

Given the success of CCTV cameras in reducing crime in the borough's town centres, in the interest of the residents south of the borough, this Council will continue with that success and make further progress in reducing crime with the installation of CCTV cameras in Rainham town centre.

A1: Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council notes the success of CCTV cameras in Havering and accepts that, when the further funding becomes available, priority will be given to those communities in Havering where official crime statistics suggest that the local need is greatest.

A2: Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

Amend as follows:

In the first line, insert after the word "cameras" the following:

"and Safer Neighbourhood Teams"

At the end of the motion, after the word "centre" insert the following:

"and oppose vigorously the proposal of the Mayor of London to close front counter facilities of the Rainham SNT and to cut its dedicated resources"

[**Note** – the motion would then read:

Given the success of CCTV cameras and Safer Neighbourhood Teams in reducing crime in the borough's town centres, in the interest of the residents south of the borough, this Council will continue with that success and make further progress in reducing crime with the installation of CCTV cameras in Rainham town centre and oppose vigorously the proposal of the Mayor of London

to close front counter facilities of the Rainham SNT and to cut its dedicated resources.]

B CLOSURE OF POLICE STATIONS

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group

In recognition of the valuable role Police Stations play in the community, this Council expresses its serious concern over any proposals to close our police stations and resolves to:

- a) Express our collective concerns in writing to the Mayor of London, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police
- b) Seek the support of our MPs and GLA Member in opposing any closures
- c) Support any other London wide activity in opposing such closures

B1: Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council is aware of the on-going consultation by the MPS on future strategies for policing in Havering. We note with concern the proposals to close some police stations, but welcome the proposed increased in manpower. We therefore call on all of Havering communities to play an active part in the current consultation.

B2: Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

Amend as follows:

In the second line after the words "any proposals" insert the following:-

"by the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Authority"

In the third line after the word "stations" insert the following:-

"and to close Safer Neighbourhood front counter facilities"

In the third line after the word "and" insert the following:-

"reduce the dedicated resources to the SNTs and"

[Note – the motion would then read:

In recognition of the valuable role Police Stations play in the community, this Council expresses its serious concern over any proposals by the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Authority to close our police stations and to close Safer

Neighbourhood front counter facilities and reduce the dedicated resources to the SNTs and resolves to:

- a) Express our collective concerns in writing to the Mayor of London, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police
- b) Seek the support of our MPs and GLA Member in opposing any closures
- c) Support any other London wide activity in opposing such closures

C CLOSURE OF ST GEORGE'S HOSPITAL, HORNCHURCH

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council acknowledges the invaluable contribution that St George's Hospital has made to the quality of life of the people of Havering, particularly older people and their dependents. It is therefore with deep regret that after various unsuccessful attempts at justifying closure of the site the Primary Care Trust has now achieved its objective.

In light of this the Council places on record its strongly held view that the future use of the site should have regard to the heritage of the site and to the needs of the people of Havering. It is widely accepted that Havering has one of the largest growing elderly populations in London. To this end, and subject to the appropriate planning processes, the Council will seek to influence any proposed development of the site.

In particular it will enter into urgent discussions with the Primary Care Trust and its successors to reinforce the strength of local feeling that the future use of the site should reflect its long-standing historical medical and community care relationship with the local community. Those discussions should explore the possibility of a pathfinding development of an older persons' village. For example, this might comprise a mixed development of retirement homes for sale and rent (involving private developers and housing associations), sheltered housing, a resource centre encompassing medical and nursing facilities, residential care facilities and provision for a luncheon club, together with other local amenities. Such development should attempt to retain as much as possible of the current architectural heritage of the site with new buildings reflecting architectural sympathy with that heritage.

In pursuance of this the Council will also:

1. Consider including a specific policy or site allocation in the forthcoming Havering Local Plan enshrining these objectives and the necessary planning principles;
2. Make urgent representations to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as to the desirability of, and seeking his support

for, a pathfinding scheme of this nature as a demonstration of 'the new localism' and as a measure of joined up government seek his liaison with the Secretary of State for Health regarding ownership and disposal of the site;

3. Consult with appropriate heritage bodies regarding possible measures for the protection and preservation of existing buildings on the site.

This Council believes that such a development would be ideally located, in a pleasant environmental setting and close to essential transport hubs. It would provide opportunity for self-help among a community of retired and older people and would be likely to attract resource from voluntary and community organisations. It would also be of benefit to the health and well-being of those people and help facilitate more people to live independent lives for longer and avoiding loneliness.

The Council concludes that in addition to the obvious community benefits, the principle of such a development would have a positive impact on the increasingly stretched resources of the various public sector agencies, including the NHS.

C1: Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

Although the St Georges Hospital site in Hornchurch is a matter for the CCG, this Council wants to work in partnership achieved the following for its local community:-

- 1) Establish a specific health facility on the site.
- 2) Protect Havering's Greenbelt,
- 3) Ensure any proceeds from the sale of the site must be spent on the local health economy in havering.

D HILLDENE SHOPPING AREA: PARKING

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council agrees to withdraw the Administration's proposal to introduce Pay & Display Parking and Resident Parking Permits at the Hilldene Shopping Area in Harold Hill

D1: Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

Hilldene shopping area's future relies on local communities continuing to use it. Therefore this Council believes that it should work towards ensuring

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that future demand for car parking is protected for local residents and that commuter parking is deterred.

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