

Committee:	Harrow Business Consultative Panel
Date:	29 January 2009
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – 2009/10 Business Consultation on Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax
Responsible Officer:	Corporate Director of Place Shaping - Andrew Trehern
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise - Cllr Marilyn Ashton
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Council Tax presentation 13.1.2009 Appendix 2 - Business rates presentation 13.1.2009

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out information on the recent consultation with businesses held on 13.1.2009.

Cabinet is requested to note the Information Report

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

2.1 A meeting was held on 13th January 2009 to facilitate consultation with the business community as required by Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

2.2 There were more than 60 attendees which included businesses, business intermediaries, and councillors.

2.3 The meeting commenced with a short presentation from David Ashton (attached as appendix 1.) The presentation covered national and local pressures on the Council budget, and in particular the economic down turn whose impact is both increasing costs for running services but also increasing demand for Council services. The GLA annual precept has been frozen for the first time. It is proposed to increase by just Council Tax by 3%. The Leader also explained other aspects of the budget consultation, a similar presentation has been provided for the Residents Panel as well as the Scrutiny Panel. The final decision on the Council budget will be taken at the full Council meeting on February 19th 2009.

2.4 The second presentation was from Lynn Allaker service manager for Business Rates. The presentation attached as (appendix 2). This provided details of the provisional multiplier based on the Retail Price Index. It went on to provide information on the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme. Around a fifth of all businesses in Harrow are currently registered for the scheme, but the Council is aware that many others who would qualify have not yet applied. The presentation also reminded businesses that rate relief on empty property had been reinstated for a limited period, for properties meeting certain criteria, and that all business properties rateable values are being reappraised by the Valuation Office, this year. The new list will be available in October 2009.

Section 3 – Further Information

Appendix 1 – Council Budget Presentation

Appendix 2 - Business Rate Consultation

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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Background Papers: None