



**MINUTES
of the
COUNCIL TAX MEETING
of the
COUNCIL
of the
LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW
held on
THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2006**

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Paddy Lyne)
 The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mary John)

Councillors:

R. Arnold
Nana Asante
David Ashton
Mrs Marilyn Ashton
Mrs Camilla Bath
Miss C A Bednell
F. Billson
Alan Blann
H. Bluston
J. Branch
K. Burchell
Mrs L. Champagnie
M. Choudhury
Mrs Janet Cowan
John Cowan
Bob Currie
Margaret Davine
M. Dharmarajah
Sanjay Dighé
A.T. Foulds

Brian Gate
Mitzi Green
Ann Groves
C. Harrison
T. Idaikkadar
Mark Ingram
N. Ismail
M. Kara
Mrs E.M. Kinnear
M. Kinsey
A.C. Knowles
Jean Lammiman
D. Lavingia
Myra Michael
Jerry J. Miles
Vina Mithani
Chris Mote
Mrs Janet Mote
John Nickolay

Mrs Joyce Nickolay
Marie-Louise Nolan
Phillip O'Dell
A. Omar
P. Osborn
Anjana Patel
A. Pinkus
R. Ray
Anthony Seymour
Navin Shah
Mrs Rajeshri Shah
E. Silver
Bill Stephenson
Keekira Thammaiah
S. Thornton
Keith Toms
M. Versallion
Anne Whitehead
G.G.V. Williams

PRAYERS

The meeting opened with Prayers offered by the
Reverend Terence H. MacMath

A PROCEDURAL MATTERS**369. COUNCIL MINUTES:****RESOLVED:**

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2005, HAVING BEEN CIRCULATED, BE TAKEN AS READ AND SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD.

370. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The Mayor invited appropriate declarations of interest by Members of Council, with particular reference to the Cabinet Recommendation in relation to the Revenue Budget and the setting of the Council Tax 2006/07.

Attention was drawn to the tabled document which recorded Members' interests as identified by them in advance.

A Member confirmed an additional individual interest.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED AT THIS MEETING BE DULY RECEIVED AND RECORDED (AS SET OUT AT APPENDIX I).

371. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**RESOLVED:**

THAT THE COUNCIL RECEIVE AND NOTE THE REPORT OF THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR, AS TABLED, UPON HER OFFICIAL DUTIES, TOGETHER WITH THE OCCASIONS ON WHICH SHE HAD BEEN REPRESENTED BY THE DEPUTY MAYOR AND A PAST MAYOR, SINCE THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.

372. NORMAN KEMBER:

The Mayor stated that the Council's thoughts were with Mr Kember, a hostage in Iraq, and his family.

373. MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor congratulated Councillor Navin Shah on being nominated an Asian Achiever of the year for Public and Uniform Service by the Asian Voice.

Congratulations were offered to Councillor Clive Harriss following the birth of his daughter.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor extended best wishes to Councillor Richard Romain following his recent accident.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor extended condolences to Councillor Adam Lent due to a bereavement in the family.

374. QUEEN'S NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST:

The following Harrow residents received awards in the Queen's New Year's Honours List:

Mrs Rekha Bhakro	Commander of the British Empire
Ms Christine Gilbert (former Director of Education, Harrow)	Commander of the British Empire
Dr Peter Carter	Officer of the British Empire
Mrs Yvonne Moran	Officer of the British Empire
Commander Chris Allison	Member of the British Empire
Mrs Kay Comfort	Member of the British Empire
Mrs Jatinder Thind	Member of the British Empire
Mr Clifford Lewis Woods	Member of the British Empire

375. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURAL RULE 26.1:

The Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor N Shah, moved and the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor C Mote, seconded a procedural motion under the general provisions of Rule 26.1 that, in line with the practice in previous years, the rules of debate be varied to reflect the importance of the Revenue Budget as a subject matter. A note reflecting the consensus among the political groups on the procedures which would apply for the purposes of the revenue budget debate had been tabled.

The proposal received the general assent of the Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE PARTIAL SUSPENSION OF THE RELEVANT COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES REGARDING THE MOVING OF A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE RULES OF DEBATE (INCLUDING EXTENDED TIME FOR OPENING SPEECHES BY ALL THREE GROUPS) AS SET OUT IN THE TABLED NOTE, BE APPROVED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE REVENUE BUDGET DEBATE.

B PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**376. PETITIONS:**

The following petitions were submitted by Members of Council:

- (1) Submitted by Councillor Anjana Patel, containing 40 signatures of local residents, requiring that relevant bodies investigate suspicious activities in an area of West Harrow which petition stood referred to the Executive.

[Notes: (i) The petition stood referred to the Executive;

(ii) the petition had also been submitted to other organisations].

- (2) Submitted by Councillor Mrs L Champagnie, containing 352 signatures of local residents, requesting the Council to extend the CCTV surveillance to include West House, Pinner Memorial Park, Pinner.

[Note: The petition stood referred to the Executive].

- (3) Submitted by Councillor Mrs E M Kinnear, containing 23 signatures of Councillors and local residents as follows:

“Given that the fear for personal safety can often be a major factor in people choosing not to use public transport at unsocial hours, this Council welcomes the announcement by Chiltern Railways that it intends to staff certain stations until the last train has run and hopes that other operators will do likewise”.

[Note: The petition stood referred to the Traffic Advisory Panel].

377. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

Further to Item 6 on the Summons, the following six questions were submitted by members of the public, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.3:

<u>QUESTION BY</u>	<u>QUESTION OF</u>	<u>TEXT OF QUESTION</u>
(1) Ms Sonia Howell-Jones	The Deputy Leader, Business Connections and Performance Portfolio Holder (Councillor Dighé)	“At the recent public meeting with HCTC, Sanjay Dighé said it cost £500,000 a year to keep one child in a special needs school. My question is how much does it cost to keep an elderly person in a Council care home? And how much if that elderly person suffers from Alzheimer’s or any other disabling illness?”

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| (2) | Mr J Zeid | The Deputy Leader,
Business Connections and
Performance Portfolio
Holder (Councillor Dighé) | “In view of the unstable nature of Harrow’s budget and balances and the apparent lack of assumption that this year’s government settlement was likely to be less than generous; What controls were put and are in place to keep spending under tight control to avoid overstretching balances, relying on over-optimistic forecasts (such as equipment and service procurement) and the spectre of raising Council Taxes to residents, from an already high base level?” |
| (3) | Mr D Grange | The Leader of the Council
(Councillor N Shah) | “How many and what senior posts are to be relinquished and what actual savings will be made? Since it’s presumed, pensioners not having their rise, Councillors also will be waiving theirs?” |
| (4) | Mr P Seedher | The Deputy Leader,
Business Connections and
Performance Portfolio
Holder (Councillor Dighé) | <p>“Despite the investment of the 21% tax hike 3 years ago and the inflation–busting tax increases since then – Harrow residents are looking forward to inflation busting tax increases – for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>How have past windfall tax increases been invested in the Council and therefore when can we expect to see some tangible return in the form of tax increases which are under the level of RPI?”</p> |
| (5) | Mr B Macleod-
Cullinane | The Environment and
Transport Portfolio Holder
(Councillor O’Dell) | “Could the Portfolio Holder please comment on the work being undertaken at Belmont Circle, specifically when is it due for completion; the danger that the works pose to pedestrians, particularly those with children trying to cross to reach St Joseph’s Primary School; the restriction on “park and shop” parking and its likely detrimental impact on Belmont Circle shops; how much is this costing Harrow Council Taxpayers in materials as well as in officer time and is a full-cost recharge being done to TfL – including for all that costly and unsightly damage to the roundabout’s greenery; and the rationale for reducing the road width and placing the bus stop further out into the road which, like so many other schemes being implemented under his direction, is only adding to traffic congestion and impatience on Harrow’s roads?” |
| (6) | Mr A Kulkarni | The Deputy Leader,
Business Connections and
Performance Portfolio
Holder (Councillor Dighé) | “What has been the percentage increase in Council Tax since Labour took control of Harrow Council in May 1998 until now?” |

[Notes: (i) The first questioner was not present at the meeting and it was agreed that a written reply be sent, with a copy to all Members of Council. The remaining questions were answered orally at the meeting;

(ii) under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 12.4, supplementary questions were asked in respect of questions (2), (4), (5) and (6), which were also answered orally;

(iii) the relevant questioners additionally accepted the offer of written responses to questions (3), (4) and (5) above, and it was agreed that the response to question (5) be copied to all Members of Council].

C RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET

378. REVENUE BUDGET 2006/07 AND MEDIUM TERM BUDGET STRATEGY 2006/07 TO 2008/09 (INCLUDING THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT) (COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION):

At item 7 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation I of the Cabinet meeting of 16 February 2006 in this matter.

The Mayor referred to an amendment tabled by the Labour Group and ensured that all Councillors and members of the public had received a copy. No other amendments had been received or tabled.

Further to the decision outlined at Resolution 372 above, the Mayor moved Recommendation I for the purposes of opening the debate. (No precedent was intended by this arrangement for this occasion).

The Mayor proceeded to make a statement. She declared that the position of the Mayor was non-political and that, in the event of the vote being tied, she would exercise her casting vote. The Mayor stated that to delay a decision on the setting of the Council Tax would be costly and that she would be voting to ensure that a lawful Council Tax was set.

The Recommendation and the amendment were debated jointly.

- (i) Councillor N Shah moved and Councillor Dighé seconded an amendment including specific proposals for the Authority's budget for 2006/07 and a revised model Council Tax resolution on the basis of these proposals, which would result in a Council Tax increase of 2.49%.
- (ii) Following a full debate, the amendment was voted upon, and was carried.
- (iii) The meeting then moved to a vote on the substantive Recommendation, as amended; this was carried and adopted.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE SUBSTANTIVE RECOMMENDATION, AS AMENDED, BE ADOPTED IN THE FOLLOWING FORM:

(1) That the 2006/07 Revenue Budget be approved to enable the Council Tax for 2006/07 to be set;

(2) that the model Council Tax resolution set out below be approved:

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2006-2007

- " (1) To note that at its meeting of the Cabinet on 12 January 2006 the Council calculated the amount of 84,326 as its Council Tax Base for the year 2006-2007 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (2) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2006-2007, in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- (i) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (2) (a) to (e) of the Act. **(Gross expenditure)** £366,395,915
- (ii) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3)(a) to (c) of the Act. **(Gross income including use of reserves)** £217,810,540
- (iii) Being the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, **as its budget requirement for the year.** £148,585,375
- (iv) Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its General Fund to its Collection Fund in accordance with Section 97(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Collection Fund Deficit) £58,593,305
- (v) Being **the amount to be raised from Council Taxes** Calculated as the amount at 2 (iii) above less the amount at 2 (iv) above. £89,992,070
- (vi) Being the amount at (v) divided by the Council Tax Base, calculated by the Council at its meeting on 12 January 2006 in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year. **(The average Band D Council Tax)** £1,067.19

(vii) Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	711.46	830.04	948.61	1067.19	1304.34	1541.50	1778.65	2134.38

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (vi) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (3) That it be noted that for 2006-2007 the Greater London Authority stated the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	192.41	224.47	256.54	288.61	352.75	416.88	481.02	577.22

- (4) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2)(vii) and (3) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2006-2007 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	903.87	1054.51	1205.15	1355.80	1657.09	1958.38	2259.67	2711.60

(3) that the new Reserves Policy be approved;

(4) that the Housing Revenue Account for 2006/07 be approved to enable rents for 2006/07 to be set;

(5) that the Members' Allowances Scheme be approved in the same form as in 2005/06, with the exception that a new Special Responsibility Allowance be paid from 1 April 2006 for the Chair of the Audit Committee.

[Notes to the Resolution: (1) The budget summary related to the Resolution is enclosed as Appendix II to these Minutes;

(2) the Members' Allowances Scheme 2006/07, as agreed, is enclosed as Appendix III to these Minutes].

[Procedural Note: At the commencement of this item further to the earlier tabling of the Labour Group amendment, the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Thornton, requested an adjournment to enable Members of his Group to assimilate the document then presented. This request was agreed by the general assent of the Council and the meeting was accordingly adjourned from 8.07pm until 8.24 pm for this purpose].

379. PROCEDURE FOR THE TERMINATION OF THE MEETING:

At 10.30 pm, during the debate on Item 7, the Mayor moved a procedural motion under the provisions of Rule 10.2(ii) that the closure of time for the Council meeting be extended by 45 minutes from 10.30 pm to 11.15 pm to allow the debate on the Item to continue and the remaining business on the Summons to be concluded.

The proposal received the general assent of the Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2(ii), THE MEETING BE EXTENDED TO 11.15 PM.

380. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2006/07 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2006/07 TO 2008/09:

Further to Item 8 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation II from the Cabinet meeting of 16 February 2006 in this matter.

The Recommendation was adopted as printed.

RESOLVED:

THAT (1) THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2006/07 BE APPROVED (as set out in paragraphs 1-16 of the report of the Director of Financial and Business Strategy submitted to the Cabinet meeting);

(2) THE COUNCIL'S LENDING LIST BE APPROVED (as set out in Appendix 2 to the report of the Director of Financial and Business Strategy submitted to the Cabinet meeting);

(3) THE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2007-08 TO 2008-09 BE APPROVED (as set out in paragraphs 17-38 of the report of the Director of Financial and Business Strategy submitted to the Cabinet meeting).

381. ROLE OF THE BEST VALUE ADVISORY PANEL:

Further to Item 9 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation I from the Cabinet meeting held on 12 January 2006 in this matter.

The Recommendation was adopted as printed.

RESOLVED:

THAT (1) THE RESIDUAL DUTIES OF THE BEST VALUE ADVISORY PANEL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES;

(2) THE APPROPRIATE AMENDMENTS BE MADE TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION.

D COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**382. STANDARDS COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBERS:**

Further to Item 10 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation I from the Standards Committee meeting held on 6 December 2005 in this matter.

The Recommendation was adopted as printed.

RESOLVED:

THAT FOUR INDEPENDENT MEMBERS BE APPOINTED TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

E QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13**383. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE (COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.2):**

Further to Item 11 on the Summons, the following five questions had been submitted by Members of the Council, notice of which had duly been given under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13.2. Of these, all were answered orally with the exception of question (5) (see Notes below).

<u>QUESTION BY</u>	<u>QUESTION OF</u>	<u>TEXT OF QUESTION</u>
(1) Councillor Silver	Health and Social Care Portfolio Holder (Councillor Margaret Davine)	"In the light of the delays in the redevelopment of Northwick Park Hospital, will the Portfolio Holder seek assurances from the Strategic Health Authority that the people of Harrow will not be disadvantaged by the continuing delays?"
(2) Councillor Seymour	Communications, Partnership and Human Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan)	"What is the percentage change and numerical change in the workforce since 31 March 2002 to date and since 31 March 2005 to date?"
(3) Councillor Seymour	The Leader of the Council (Councillor N Shah)	"How much has the Council spent on external consultants since 31 March 2005 and do figures now exist for the cost of employing such consultants since 2002?"
(4) Councillor John Nickolay	Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder (Councillor O'Dell)	"The Good Going campaign promotes the benefits of walking, cycling, using public transport and car sharing in London. A recent leaflet issued by this Council claims that the Transport Research Laboratory has praised Harrow's Travel Awareness Promotion. Does this mean that after nearly seven years since it was adopted by the Council this

Labour administration is at last implementing the Green Travel Plan for the Civic Centre, meaning that Councillors and Officers of this Authority are setting an example to other employers and residents in our Borough?"

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| (5) Councillor Vina Mithani | The Leader of the Council
(Councillor N Shah) | "What is going to be done about crime in the Kenton West Ward, as this both violence against the person and theft and handling have risen between the 31 March 2004 to 31 March 2005, according to the Council's own figures?" |
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[Notes: (i) In respect of question (1) above, the Health and Social Care Portfolio Holder undertook to place the response received from the Strategic Health Authority in the public domain;

(ii) in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.4, it was agreed that the relevant Portfolio Holders would additionally provide a written answer to questions (2) and (3) above;

(iii) under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13.5, the Members submitting questions (1) to (4) above each asked a supplementary question which was also answered orally, with the exception of the supplementary question in respect of question (3), to which the Leader of the Council undertook to provide a written response;

(iv) the time allowed under Procedure Rule 13.2 expired and the fifth notified question could not be asked at Council. It was noted that a written response would be provided].

F MOTIONS

384. MOTION AT ITEM 12(1) - GRANTS FUNDING 2006/07:

In acknowledging the mover and seconder of the Motion appearing at Item 12(1) of the Summons, the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor C Mote, following legal advice, sought leave of Council to withdraw the Motion pending the March 2006 meeting of the Grants Advisory Panel.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MOTION SET OUT AT ITEM 12(1) OF THE SUMMONS IN THE NAMES OF COUNCILLORS MRS JOYCE NICKOLAY AND MARILYN ASHTON BE WITHDRAWN FROM CONSIDERATION WITH THE CONSENT OF COUNCIL.

385. MOTION AT ITEM 12(2) - ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY (SECTION 85(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972): REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION OF APPROVED ABSENCE ON BEHALF OF COUNCILLOR ROMAIN:

- (i) Councillor C Mote moved and Councillor D Ashton seconded the following Motion appearing at Item 12(2) of the Summons:

"In the eventuality that Councillor Romain were unable to be in attendance on February 23 that this Council approves under the provisions of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 an extension of time beyond the statutory six months during which Councillor Romain may remain absent from meetings of the Authority and retain his elected office, by reason of the personal injury accident which he had suffered and which precludes him from reasonably attending Council meetings at the Civic Centre or elsewhere for the time being, and that extension of time shall run until the 8 of may 2006, and if re-elected until 1 June 2006 inclusive".

- (ii) The Motion was carried by general assent.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MOTION SET OUT AT (i) ABOVE BE ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY.

G MISCELLANEOUS

386. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER THE URGENCY PROCEDURE AND USE OF THE SPECIAL URGENCY PROCEDURE:

In accordance with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, the Meeting received a report at Item 13 of the Summons regarding decisions taken as a matter of urgency by Portfolio Holders, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CABINET, AS NOW REPORTED, BE NOTED.

387. URGENT DECISION TAKEN ON A MATTER RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL: APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY:

An urgent decision on a matter reserved to Council which had, in accordance with the delegated authority granted by Resolution 34(2) (28.5.02) to effect an in-year amendment to an outside body appointment, been the subject of consultations with the Leaders of the three political groups on the Council and had been agreed on behalf of the Council, was now reported.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL AS NOW REPORTED BE NOTED.

(CLOSE OF MEETING: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 11.16 pm).