

HARROW BUSINESS CONSULTATIVE PANEL

7 FEBRUARY 2008

Chairman: * Councillor Manji Kara

Councillors: * Mrinal Choudhury * Susan Hall
* Keith Ferry

* Denotes Member present

47. **Feedback from Consultation on Council Tax and Business Rates:**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise on the consultation with local businesses on Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax for 2008/09.

The officer outlined the history of the Panel and its reformatting due to consistently low attendance at formal meetings. Discussions with local businesses were now being held at informal quarterly meetings, which had proved a more successful way of engaging with local businesses.

A Member queried what feedback had been provided at the consultation meeting. The officer responded that businesses were primarily interested in the rate relief available to small businesses. Members agreed that the consultation was useful and productive, but considered there had not been sufficient time for the responses to be fed back to the Panel and suggested there should be two weeks between the consultation meeting and the Panel meeting. The Panel requested that that future reports include details of feedback from businesses at the consultation meeting. Additionally, the officer was asked to submit feedback to the Panel after all quarterly meetings.

A discrepancy was noted in the number of small business that received rate relief and clarification was sought. It was also queried if the deadline stated in the report was correct. The officer would report back to the Panel with the correct details. After a general discussion of the report, the Panel

RESOLVED: That the report be referred to Cabinet for noting.