

HARROW COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 2 APRIL 2009

Amendment to Item 13 - Motion 3 'Business rates'

Proposer: Cllr David Ashton

Seconder: Cllr Jeremy Zeid

“This Council notes that from April 1st 2009 business rates across the country are due to increase by 2%, as the result of a last-minute ‘U-turn’ by Government. This Council recognises that this increase has been brought down from 5% by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but is of the opinion that this action does not go far enough. This Council thus:

- I. is resolved to allow, on application, small businesses in the Borough to pay their business rates over 12 months rather than the usual 10.
- II. urges all local businesses to investigate whether they qualify for the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme. This Council estimates that over half of the Borough’s businesses are likely to qualify, but that at present nearly two-thirds of those businesses do not claim this relief.
- III. urges the Government to defer the entire increase on the grounds that:
 - a) a 2% increase will still hit small businesses hard at a time when the majority of them are struggling through the recession.
 - b) the original 5% increase is linked to September 2008’s RPI figure, but the economic situation has changed dramatically since then.
 - c) if the increase had been linked to February 2009’s RPI it would have been 0%, rendering any form of increase unacceptable at this time.
- IV. is resolved to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express the aforementioned concerns.”