

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



*Municipal Building,
Kingsway,
Widnes.
WA8 7QF*

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE HALTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of the Halton Borough Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall on Wednesday, 5 March 2008 commencing at 6.30 p.m.. for the purpose of considering and passing such resolution(s) as may be deemed necessary or desirable in respect of the matters mentioned in the Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', is positioned above the title 'Chief Executive'.

Chief Executive

-AGENDA-

- a) Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2008/09 - KEY
DECISION

The Executive Board considered the attached report. Please note that the Cheshire Police precept is still awaited. Once this has been received, a revised report will be circulated.

RECOMMENDED: That the resolution set out in Appendix A be adopted, which includes setting the budget at £101.895m and the Band D Council Tax for Halton (before Parish, Police and Fire precepts) of £1,079.97.

AREA FORUM COMMENTS REGARDING THE BUDGET PROCESSBroadheath, Ditton, Hale and Hough Green

- There was a need to involve young people representatives in this consultation in order to gain their views, for example via Connexions or the Borough Youth Forum.
- Cleaner streets was considered to be an important issue.

Appleton, Kingsway and Riverside

- There was a concern that there were too many high paid managers.
- There should be more money spent on education.
- Road safety was considered to be an important issue.
- There should be an investment in the condition of roads – repairing rather than “patching up”.
- There was also support for an increase in fines in respect of drivers parking on double yellow lines and on pavements.
- The Council tax rise should be kept well below 4% at the rate of inflation.

Farnworth, Halton View and Birchfield

- An individual commented he was happy to pay more Council tax as long as it was spent on services and not on providing additional staff.
- Clarification was also sought on how the Local Authority reviewed its services. It was noted that Halton Borough Council was reviewed on an annual basis by the Audit Commission, which examined the Council on cost and quality of service. However, outside of this annual review, the Authority was continually reviewing its services and trying to find savings.

Mersey, Heath, Grange and Halton Brook

- One lady queried whether the Council Tax money went to older people services. The Lead Officer gave a response on the breakdown of care provided and promised to send her a detailed document.
- Surprise was expressed that the outcome said that people wanted to spend less on car parking ie traffic issues.

Castlefields, Norton North, Norton South and Windmill Hill

- The presentation talks about the Council's crime prevention and there is also the police precept - does that mean we are being charged twice for crime prevention?
- There is a need for more bins and street lighting
- Older people think that less should be spent on young people, but there are a lack of facilities for young people.

- Have management structures been looked at, savings from here could be spent on frontline services.
- Council seems to get rid of frontline staff, not management.
- What precepts were expected from the Police and Fire Service?

Beechwood and Halton Lea

Clarification was sought on Car Park Charges and other parking enforcement arrangements (these were not put forward as a suggested scheme). In response the Forum was advised that the Council did not own sufficient car parks where fees were charged. With regard to parking enforcement arrangements, although the authority could employ parking enforcement officers, this would need to be self-financing. In neighbouring Sefton Borough Council where parking enforcement officers were employed, the initial set up costs were approx £1m. Parking enforcement officers were something that could be considered with a neighbouring authority but not for Halton on its own.

Daresbury

- Street Cleansing was a high priority in all four areas of the Forum - Preston Brook, Moore, Sandymoor and Daresbury,
- Anti social behaviour was not really a problem in the ward, and it was felt that there was not a need for activities for teenagers as the population was mainly older people in the above areas.

Halton Liberal Democrats
2008/09 Budget
Proposed Amendment

As part of the Budget setting process for 2008/09 we would like to propose the following amendment to item 3 (a) on the Agenda for the full council meeting of 5th March 2008.

These savings were submitted to the Executive Board prior to the budget being set.

Energy Saving Programme – as recommended last year (programme should be in its second year by now)	50,000
Advertising, Marketing and Promotion. – as last year (balance required to deliver a 15% reduction - 11.6% achieved)	12,000
Executive Board (reduction to 6 posts in line with Directorate structure)	57,000
Freeze Councillors allowances for one year	12,000
No special allowance paid to Vice Chairs	30,000
Invest to Save – Productivity target for KPMG Partners	75,000
Voluntary Sector – Do not cut this valuable area	(72,000)
Fund Voluntary Sector spending by reducing Priorities Fund in view of the new LAA shape yet to be agreed.	72,000
TOTAL EXTRA SAVINGS	----- £ 237,000 =====

This would reduce the Council Tax increase from the 3.5% as per the proposal down to 2.9%.

Proposed: Councillor Linda Redhead

Seconded: Councillor Tim Sly

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