

PARISH CONFERENCE

MONDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 2019

At 7.00 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
6.	<u>PARISH EQUALISATION GRANTS</u> Councillor Saunders to present report to the Conference.	3 - 4

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Please reply to: Rob Stubbs
Direct Line: 01628 796341
Email: rob.stubbs@rbwm.gov.uk
My ref: RS/GP
Your ref:

26 November 2018

Sent by email to:

Dear Mr Malki

COUNCIL TAX – PRECEPTS AND TAX BASE 2019/20

I am writing to advise you of the preliminary Council Tax base figures for 2019/20 which will be submitted to the Royal Borough's Cabinet on 13 December 2018. The tax base is the band D equivalent for your Parish, based on the number of properties at the end of October 2018, together with an allowance for new properties expected for occupation in 2019/20.

You are aware that each Parish Council receives an extra amount from the Borough Council, in addition to the Parish Council Precept. The total amount passed on to each Parish Council is therefore greater than is declared to Residents for Parish activities on their Council Tax bills. The extra amounts have continued to be calculated by reference to the support to Parish Councils through the benefits system which ended some time ago, although the Borough Council has not been obligated to fund these extra amounts from Council Tax.

In the table below you will see the draft calculation of the extra amount for your Parish for 2019/20 using the same basis. If you have information that would change these figures, please let me know as soon as possible. On the enclosed schedule you will also see the actual extra amounts paid to each Parish in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 and the draft extra amounts for 2019/20. For the current year, you will also see the extra amount for each Elector based on the Electors in September 2018 and the Band D Parish Precept.

Cllr MJ Saunders, Cabinet Member for Finance, advises me that the Royal Borough's Cabinet remains committed to providing additional financial support to Parish Councils and that the total extra amount of £60,984.52 shown on the attached schedule is included in the emerging 2019/20 Budget. Cllr Saunders has also explained to me that he is concerned about continuing to base the extra amounts on the same calculations, because they may no longer reflect the activities, projects and funding needs of each Parish.

Cllr Saunders has asked me to pass on his suggestion that the representatives of all Parish Councils consider and discuss at the Parish Conference currently scheduled on 11th February 2019 any or all of the following:

1. Leaving the extra amounts and the basis of their calculation unchanged.
2. Changing the basis for allocating the funding to each Parish to reflect alternative criteria, e.g. relative activities, projects underway or planned, reserve levels, etc?
3. Changing the allocations to a grant award basis, where each Parish Council could apply for a share of the funding based on the financial needs of the Parish Council and particular

activities or project needs. The allocations could be recommended for approval at the Parish Conference based on recommendations from a meeting of, say, three (or more) Parish Council Clerks who are selected by the Parish Conference. The amounts approved by the Parish Conference could then be affirmed for payment by the Royal Borough's Officer Leadership Team or Grants Panel or Cabinet.

4. Reducing the £60,984.52 in the 19/20 Budget to contribute towards the savings required to fund the significant ongoing increase in the costs of supporting children in care.

I enclose precept forms for you to complete. Form A shows the estimated tax base for your council for 2019/20 in band D equivalents. Form B shows the compensating grant, if applicable this will be paid in early April 2019.

Form A & B will be used for our report to Cabinet on 7 February 2019 so please return both with either a final or provisional figure by Friday, 18 January 2019 at the latest. If your precept is still provisional at this date, please let me know the date when your parish precept will be set.

If there is any change between the figures provided here, and those approved by Cabinet on 13 December 2018 I will let you know.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01628 796341. Precepts will be paid in two instalments as usual, at the beginning of April 2019 and the beginning of October 2019 to coincide with our normal BACS payment runs. Please let me know if this poses any difficulties for you.

Yours sincerely

Rob Stubbs
Head of Finance