

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL TAX SETTING COMMITTEE**

**MEETING HELD IN THE FIRST FLOOR ROOM 2, COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD,  
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY ON THURSDAY, 10TH JANUARY, 2019 AT 7.00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** *Councillors Councillor Julian Cunningham (Chairman), (Vice-Chairman),  
Lynda Needham and Richard Thake*

**In Attendance:** *Mark Scanes (Systems and Technical Manager), Geraldine Goodwin  
(Revenues Manager) and Amelia McNally (Committee & Member  
Services Officer)*

**14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 20 seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Councillor Ian Albert

**15 MINUTES - 28 FEBRUARY 2018**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 50 seconds*

**RESOLVED:** *That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 be  
approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.*

**16 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 1 minute and 8 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

**17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 1 minute and 10 seconds*

- (1) The Chairman announced that Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting, but she asked them to not use flash and to disable any beeps or other sound notifications that emitted from their devices. In addition, the Chairman had arranged for the sound at this particular meeting to be recorded;
- (2) The Chairman reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question;
- (3) The Chairman asked that, for the benefit of any members of the public present at the meeting, Officers announce their name and their designation to the meeting when invited to speak.

**18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 1 minute and 40 seconds*

There was no public participation.

**19 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2019/2020**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 1 minute and 46 minutes*

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Information Technology seeking approval of the Council Tax Base for 2019/2020. The report contained the following appendices:

Appendix A – Council Tax Base by Parish 2019/2020; and  
Appendix B - Example of Council Tax Base calculation for Letchworth Garden City.

The proposed 1% increase was an estimate based on inflation and they were more likely to underestimate than overestimate the figure.

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Information Technology advised that the 2019/2020 Council Tax Base figures for each Parish contained in Appendix A to the report assumed a 1% non-collection rate. The Council Tax Base for 2019/2020 was proposed to be £49,498.40.

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Information Technology stated that Appendix B provided an example of how the Council Tax Base was calculated for Letchworth Garden City.

In response to a question, the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Information Technology commented that the impact of Universal Credit on the Council Tax collection rate would probably be less than its impact on rent arrears collection.

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.16(h), the Chairman requested that a Recorded Vote be taken on the Council Tax Base 2019/2020.

*(Voting:*

*For: Councillors Julian Cunningham, Mrs L.A. Needham and R.A.C. Thake - 3*

*Against: 0*

*Abstentions: 0)*

It was therefore

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a non-collection rate of 1% for 2019/2020 be approved; and
- (2) That the amount calculated by this Council as its Council Tax Base for 2019/2020 shall be £49,498.40, and that the individual sums shown for each Parish, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be agreed.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To fulfil the statutory requirement to set a Council Tax Base for the District and to enable Major and Local Precepting Authorities to set their levels of Council Tax for 2019/2020.

**20 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE RETURN 1 SUBMISSION 2019/2020**

*Audio Recording – Start time of Item – 8 minutes and 29 seconds*

Mark Scanes explained that this was the second version of the NNDR1 as it was part of a pilot scheme and had been changed to reflect this otherwise, the principals and formula were identical to last year.

The ATM saga continued. The VOA had been lost and the losses sustained would be £112,000 however; the VOA had sought petition to the Supreme Court to have the decision overturned as this had been going on for 2-3 years.

Mazar's Case – Stairwell Tax – VOA decided to value the properties separately. This had been lost and the Court decided properties could be revalued as one property which had caused a lot of problems for many rate payers. The effect would now have to reapply to the VOA to have the properties merged. The effect of this was unknown due to the fact that when a split came through from VOA, they were not informed as to why it had been split.

Another relief had been introduced in the autumn budget for business rates in addition to other reliefs.

The effects of valuations in the 2017 list were unknown. The 2010 list was now closed with no new appeals. If there were an appeal for a 2010 list for a property, it would have the knock on effect of the 2017 list. The figures were hugely variable. If the appeal was won, NHDC paid. The Government did not pay anything. Part 1 states that less was being retained as a lump sum than last year and the county was retaining more due to the split however they were better off overall.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the draft NNDR1 for 2019/2020, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) That the draft version of the NNDR1 was received on Wednesday 17 January 2018 from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the final version of the NNDR1 would be returned to MHCLG by Thursday 31 January 2019, be agreed.
- (3) That any amendments to the NNDR1 Return resulting from changes to the form and any additional guidance, be delegated to the Service Director – Customers in consultation with the Service Director – Resources and the Committee Chairman; and
- (4) That the inclusion of Hertfordshire as one of the 15 new Business Rate Pilots as announced in the draft Financial Settlement in December 2019 and that the current NNDR1 would not reflect this, be agreed.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with statutory requirements.

The meeting closed at 7:25pm