

RECORD OF COUNCIL DECISIONS - WEDNESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2020

Record Prepared by: Chief Executive
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Item No	Report Title	Record of Decision
12	Changes to Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21	<p>Agreed to increase the maximum level of support for all working age claimants to 100%</p> <p>Agreed to maintain the existing non-dependant deductions and temporary absence from Great Britain rules as they apply to working age claimants.</p> <p>Agreed to make the scheme work better for Universal Credit claimants, specifically by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing the disregard towards pension contributions from 50% to 100%.• Ignoring Bereavement Support Payments and Universal Credit Transitional Severe Disability Payments within the calculation for council tax support assessments.• Aligning the dates for when changes of circumstances are applied from to reflect the same dates as the claimant's monthly assessment period of Universal Credit.

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		<p>Agreed to simplifying the claims process by,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making it easier to backdate council tax support for up to six months without the need to explain why the claimant didn't claim earlier (i.e. to remove the good cause provision) • Not requiring a new application within six months of a previous claim ending, where the Council has the financial information to confirm entitlement. <p>Noted that the gross cost of agreeing to the decisions above is £1.6M to Royal Borough of Greenwich (+ £0.5M to GLA), which is accounted for under the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.</p>
13	Council Tax Base 2020/21	<p>Agreed a council tax base for the whole authority area for 2020/21 of 83,664.91 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>Agreed an additional council tax base for the Gloucester Circus Garden Square area of the authority for 2020/21 of 95.68.</p> <p>Agreed a continuance in 2020/21 of the Council Tax discount of 0% on Class A & Class B dwellings (second homes) and Class C & D dwellings (empty homes).</p> <p>Agreed a continuance of a Council Tax premium of 100% in 2020/21 in respect of Long Term Empty dwellings for dwellings empty for up to 5 years.</p>

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		<p>Agreed a Council Tax premium of 200% in 2020/21 in respect of Long Term empty dwellings, for dwellings empty longer than 5 years.</p> <p>Agreed a continuance in 2020/21 of the Council Tax discount of 100% in respect of Royal Borough of Greenwich resident care leavers, aged under 25, in line with the decision of Council in March 2017.</p> <p>Noted the proposed changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme recommended by Cabinet for Council earlier on the agenda are included in the tax base calculations.</p> <p>Noted that the council tax base relevant to the Southern Region of the Environment Agency for flood defence levy apportionment purposes in 2020/21 is 8,301.31.</p> <p>Noted that the council tax base relevant to the Thames Region of the Environment Agency for flood defence levy apportionment purposes in 2020/21 is 75,363.60.</p>
14	Carbon Neutral Plan Evidence Base	<p>Noted the Carbon Neutral Plan Evidence Base produced in response to the Climate Emergency Declaration passed by Full Council in June 2019;</p> <p>Noted that the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan will be brought to Full Council for approval in autumn 2020.</p>

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15	<p>Motion “Stepping up action on litter and flytipping in the Royal Borough of Greenwich”</p>	<p>Resolved –</p> <p>Council acknowledges that levels of litter and fly tipping in our borough, while in line with UK urban averages, are still at unacceptable levels.</p> <p>Council, however, welcomes the reduction in fly-tipping in Greenwich and the tremendous efforts of our street services staff working in all weathers and often unsocial hours to keep our public realm as pristine as possible. Further, we salute the efforts of our volunteer environmental champions and the new junior environmental champions in our schools working with community groups, friends of parks groups and others to keep Greenwich green and clean.</p> <p>Litter is unsightly, a health hazard both in terms of immediate hygiene as well as the harmful environmental impact of plastics and other non-organic materials on plants and fauna. Litter and fly tipping divert scarce council resources from priority areas.</p> <p>Council resolves to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Step up action to see those littering and fly tipping fined. - Involve all schools in the borough in the Junior Environmental Champions’ Programme to conduct litter picks and make use of the full range of tools available to them to deter littering and encourage care for our local environment - Work with local businesses to ensure that every tool possible is utilised to minimise littering and fly tipping - including but not limited to:

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. wall mounted ashtrays on food and drink outlets 2. voluntary clean ups of areas outside shops, food and drink outlets 3. the ability for businesses and individuals to notify the council of businesses and individuals who are fly tipping or leaving waste out overnight. 4. continue to support collaborative initiatives such as Love Woolwich and Love Plumstead involving local business, the council and voluntary groups to reduce waste, littering and detritus and improve our town centres and High Streets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue to support our environment and junior environment champions throughout the year and to raise the profile of the British Spring Clean week across the Borough. - Supports the launch of the Adopt a Place scheme to encourage local residents to care for their local street or estate which could include planting, wilding and litter-picks.
16	Motion - “Standing together against anti-semitism and racism in all its forms”	<p>Agreed to take the motion as an item of urgent business</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <p>At its meeting in January 2019 the Full Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich unanimously passed a motion to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism - in response to growing concerns around the rise of antisemitism in the UK, and in recognition of our community’s long-standing united stance against racism in all its forms. In recent weeks our borough has had a stark, and shocking, reminder of the continuation of anti-semitic sentiment amongst a small minority, with the painting</p>

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		<p>of anti-semitic and racist graffiti at Blackheath Standard, Charlton and East Greenwich. This Council unequivocally condemns these actions, and re-iterates that we are united in our rejection of any acts of hate and prejudice that seek to divide our communities.</p> <p>Council notes that the response of the Royal Borough of Greenwich and our community to this graffiti has been not just words - showing important solidarity as well as sorrow that this has happened - but also actions. Immediate action was taken to remove the graffiti in question, and representatives from across the borough attended the Holocaust Memorial Day service at the Town Hall - coming together as we always have, and always will, to reject anti-semitism and racism in all its forms.</p> <p>Council notes that the rise in antisemitism mirrors a national rise in public acts of racism, islamophobia, homophobia and misogyny, and re-iterates its determination to oppose and challenge these acts using every means available to us.</p> <p>Council is united in standing together with our Jewish citizens to make clear that the Royal Borough is their home and their community, and that anti-semitism and hatred of any kind has no place in our borough.</p>

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		<p>Council hereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes a clear statement of support for our Jewish residents at a time of rising antisemitism and reiterate its commitment to challenging hate speech and conduct as defined by the IHRA. • Reconfirms our collective pledge to challenge racism in all its forms and making sure that Greenwich has no place for hate or the perpetrators of hate crime of any kind.