
Meeting: Council
Date: 23 February 2012
Subject: Council Tax Resolution
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources
Summary: The report presents the Formal Council Tax Resolution arising from the Budget proposals presented to Council for approval.

Advising Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Financial Officer

Contact Officer: Charles Warboys, Chief Financial Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

Key Decision Yes

Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate) Not Applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Council's priorities were a central strand of the Medium Term Financial Plan and have been a specific factor in evaluating savings proposals and the resultant Council Tax levels.

Financial:

Based on the revenue budget proposals, approving the formal Council Tax Resolution as set out in Appendix A would result in an average Band D Council Tax for Central Bedfordshire of £1,316.59.

Legal:

The Council Tax Resolution is set in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

Refer to full Budget / MTFP report – all the equality impacts were assessed as part of the budget setting process and the results are held in Appendix K of that report.

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- Comments from scrutiny were taken into account by the Executive in formulating its budget proposals to Council

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. that the

(a) Council approve The Council Tax Resolution Set Out In Appendix A.

Reason for Recommendation(s): To enable the Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2012/13. The Council is required to approve a statutory Council Tax Resolution in the form shown in Appendix A. The formal resolution is based on figures contained in the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012/13 to 2015/16 recommended by the Executive on the 14th February 2012, for approval by Council.

Executive Summary

Central Bedfordshire, in keeping with all local authorities at this time, faces significant financial challenges in responding to the Coalition Government's push to reduce the national budget deficit, together with a raft of new policy directives. The budget proposes to freeze Council Tax for 2012/13 and savings proposals have been developed in line with the strategic direction for the Council.

Background

1. The Executive at its meeting on the 14th February 2012 considered a detailed report on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012/13 to 2015/16. Members are asked to refer to that report for a detailed explanation of the background to this report.
2. The Council Tax Resolution is set in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and is submitted at this stage on the basis of the budget proposals set out in that report.

3. The Localism Act has made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and now requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax Requirement for the year, not its budget requirement as previously.
4. Separate Council Tax levels have been set for the former Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire district areas. Band D levels are £1,308.33 and £1,326.24 respectively, representing a freeze at 2011/12 rates for Mid Bedfordshire and a reduction for South Bedfordshire in accordance with the harmonisation plan. Where councils have frozen council tax levels in 2011/12, the Government is providing support in the form of a specific grant equivalent to an average 2.5% increase for 2011/12 to 2014/15. The Government is also providing a one-off additional Council Tax freeze grant in 2012/13 for the same amount for those councils that freeze Council Tax in that year. For Central Bedfordshire, these grants will total approximately £6.4m for 2012/13. Harmonisation of the Council Tax levels between the former Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire districts will be completed in 2013/14.
5. The precepts and Band D Council Tax levels of all precepting bodies have been notified. These are detailed in Appendix B.

Town & Parish Councils/Meetings

6. The Town and Parish Council/Meetings Precepts for 2012/13 as detailed in Appendix B total £9,300,066. The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Town and Parish Councils/Meetings is 7.14% and results in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £95.40 for 2012/13 compared to £89.05 in 2011/12.

Bedfordshire Police Authority

7. Bedfordshire Police Authority met on 17th February 2012 and set its precept at £14,669,916. This results in a Band D Council Tax of £150.49 for 2012/13, a 3.95% increase on 2011/12.

Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority

8. At the time of writing this report, Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority was due to meet on 22nd February 2012 and the proposed precept for approval was £8,197,177. This results in a Band D Council Tax of £84.09 for 2012/13, a 2% increase on 2011/12. Should there be any amendment to these amounts following the meeting of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority, then an Addendum will be submitted at the Council meeting confirming the approved amounts.

Proposals

9. Council is required to approve a resolution in the statutory format and the formal Council Tax Resolution at Appendix A is based on the budget proposals, that result in the total Band D Council Tax as shown in the "Valuation Bands". The various levels of Council Tax for each Band for each Town and Parish Council/Meeting are shown at Appendix C.

10. If the formal Council Tax Resolution at Appendix A is approved, the total Band D Council Tax will be as follows:

	2011/12	2012/13	Increase
Mid Bedfordshire	1,308.33	1,308.33	0.00%
South Bedfordshire	1,344.15	1,326.24	(1.33)%
Central Bedfordshire Council average	1,324.92	1,316.59	(0.63)%
Bedfordshire Police Authority	144.77	150.49	3.95%
Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority	82.44	84.09	2.00%
Sub-total	1,552.13	1,551.17	(0.06)%
Town and Parish average	89.05	95.40	7.14%
Total	1,641.18	1,646.57	0.33%

Appendices:

Appendix A – Council Tax Resolution 2012/13

Appendix B – Parish Council/Meeting Precepts 2012/13

Appendix C – Parish Council Tax Bands

Background Papers:

Town & Parish Council/Meeting Precept Submissions

Executive Report 14th February 2012

Location of papers: Customer and Shared Services Directorate, Priory House, Chicksands