

<p>Cabinet</p> <p>10 January 2017</p>	
<p>Report of: Zena Cooke; Corporate Director of Resources</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Calculation of Council Tax Base 2017/18</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor David Edgar, Cabinet Member for Resources
Originating Officer(s)	Zena Cooke; Corporate Director of Resources
Wards affected	All Wards
Key Decision?	Yes
Community Plan Theme	One Tower Hamlets

Executive Summary

This report sets out the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2017/18 as required by statute.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, that the amount calculated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as its Council Tax Base for the year 2017/18 shall be 88,784.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The scheme for calculation of council tax established under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to agree their Council Tax Base and to notify it to the preceptors (GLA) by 31st January 2017.
- 1.2 If the tax base is not agreed and notified to the Preceptor by 31st January 2017, this may prejudice the calculation of Council Tax for 2017/18.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The recommendations contained within this report are made in line with the statutory requirements outlined in sections 1.1 and 1.2 of this report; therefore the Council is not presented with alternative options is setting it's Council Tax Base.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The Council Tax legislation requires local authorities to agree their Council Tax Base and to notify it to the preceptors by 31st January 2017.
- 3.2 The tax base is central to the Council Tax system because it is the means by which the budget is translated into tax levels. For the next financial year, the estimated tax base has been estimated at 88,784
- 3.3 A simple way of looking at this is, broadly, if 1.0% is added to the band D tax, this would raise £817,567 to the General Fund Budget.
- 3.4 The 2016/17 Council Tax Base was 83,493. The estimated 2017/18 figure represents an increase of 5,291 properties (6.3%).
- 3.5 The government's Core Spending Power calculation assumes that Council Tax will be increased by the Adults Social care (ASC) precept up to 2% in every year to 2019/20 and by an inflationary amount equal to less than 2% in order to avoid a referendum for an 'excessive' Council tax increase.
- 3.6 The Council's 2016/17 Council tax rate was set at £920.85 reflecting an increase of 2% (for the ASC precept) and a further 1.99% general increase.
- 3.7 This report summarises the principles of the tax base calculation and sets out the calculation for 2017/18.

CALCULATION OF THE TAX BASE

- 3.8 The tax base calculation must take account of:
 - 3.5.1 the number of properties in each band, including estimated changes during the year (for Tower Hamlets this includes an estimated increase in property numbers due to the continuing regeneration of the borough);

3.5.2 the number of discounts, taking account of estimated changes during the year; and

3.5.3 the estimated collection rate; the 2017/18 tax base has been calculated on the basis of a collection rate of 97.0%.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

4.1 This report incorporates the comments of the Chief Financial Officer.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

5.1 The Council is required by section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (“the Act”) to calculate for each financial year the basic amount of its council tax. The basic amount of council tax must be calculated according to a prescribed formula that uses the amount which is calculated by the Council as its council tax base. The council tax base is in turn calculated by reference to a formula prescribed in the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (“the Tax Base Regulations”).

5.2 The Council is required to submit its council tax base to the major precepting authority, namely the Greater London Authority (‘GLA’) between 1 December and 31 January in the financial year preceding the financial year for which the calculation of council tax base is made. If the Council does not submit its council tax base to the GLA, then the GLA is required to determine the calculation for itself, in the manner prescribed in the Tax Base Regulations.

5.3 Whilst the making of a calculation in accordance with section 31A of the Act is for Full Council, the preparation of estimates of the amounts to be aggregated in making the calculation or of other amounts to be used for the purposes of the calculation and estimates of the calculation for consideration is the function of the Executive as per regulations 4(9) – 4(11) of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Calculation of the Council’s tax base is an important step towards calculation of the basic amount of council tax. The calculation of council tax is a key element of the Council’s budget, which will enable it to deliver on its Strategic Plan and, in turn, the Community Plan.

6.2 The Council’s Strategic Plan is focused upon meeting the needs of the diverse communities living in Tower Hamlets. The Key Themes reflect diversity issues and there are key equality milestones in relation to delivering One Tower Hamlets.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This is a statutory calculation and therefore there are no best value implications.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

8.1 There are no SAGE implications.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 If the tax base is not agreed, the Council will not be able to set a legal budget for 2017/18 and notify the preceptor by 31st January 2017. Consequently the Council may be open to legal challenge and also affect the budget setting arrangements for the GLA.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no Crime and Disorder Reduction Implications.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix A – Calculation of Council Tax Base 2017/18

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended).

Officer contact details for documents:

Ruth Ebaretonbofa-Morah (Deputy Financial Planning Manager) - ext. 1698