

Council
25 February 2025

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 25 February 2025 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors F.Marsh (Chair)
M.Hobbs, T.Skottowe, I.Walsh, K.Bonkur, K.Gardner,
L.Gilbert, J.Otumunye, M.Birleson, S.Bonfante,
J.Cragg, H.Goldwater, R.Grewal, M.Holloway,
D.Jones, T.Kingsbury, R.Lass, G.Michaelides,
T.Mitchinson, L.Musk, A.Nix, D.Panter, R.Platt,
J.Quinton, T.Rowse, B.Sarson, A.Scott, P.Shah,
M.Siewniak, K.Thorpe, R.Trigg, C.Watson, J.Weston,
P.Zukowskyj and B.Fitzsimon

OFFICIALS K.Ng, Chief Executive
PRESENT: R.Baker, Executive Director (Finance & Transformation)
S.McDaid, Executive Director (Resident Services & Climate Change)
Z.Al-Jawad, Executive Director (Place)
G.Ramtohal, Assistant Director (Legal & Governance)
C.Cade, Governance Services Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L.Chesterman, A.Chesterman, L.Musk, M.Short, S.Khan, J. Broach, J. Skoczylas, A. Bardett, J. Boulton, L.Crofton and S.Thusu.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

Councillors Kingbury and Zukowskyj declared interests as Hertfordshire County Councillors.

3. COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2025/26

Council approved the 2025/26 budget on 3 February 2025 and the purpose of the report was to set the Council Tax for 2025/26. Full Council was asked to agree the increase in average Band D Council Tax (excluding Parish precepts) by £7.11 (2.99%) to £244.71 for 2025/26. Parish precepts have increased by 7.5% overall to £2.384m.

The report set out the tax base in each of the town and parish areas. It was noted that for the year 2025/26 the major precepting authorities, Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire have stated the amounts in precepts

Council
25 February 2025

issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 and shown in the tables on pages 4 and 5 of the report.

After taking into account the precepts from Parish Councils, Hertfordshire County Council and Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, the average band D Council Tax for the borough area for 2025/26 is £2,333.46, this is an increase of 4.88%. However, the band D council tax varies from £2,276.38 to £2,408.18 and the report also shows that the tax change for 2025/26 will range from 4.47% to 5.66%.

It was moved by Councillor Scott and seconded by Councillor Jones.

During the debate the following points were raised:

- A member queried whether all members needed to declare an interest as they are paid from the Council Tax which Full Council were being asked to agree. The Monitoring Officer confirmed this was not required.
- A councillor raised concerns regarding parking enforcement, and savings that were planned to be made in the leisure.
- A Councillor expressed concerns regarding the increase in the charge on garden waste collections of over 9%, well above inflation and it would be interesting to note over the year if this charge has become too high and discouraging take up which will be both environmentally and financially counterproductive. He also expressed concern on behalf of the public about additional income expected from district enforcement given the many examples fining for small issues the concerns are two-fold. The Member also reiterated the concerns about the changes in the large savings stemming from the service review in Leisure and Culture, a highly valued service, and the significant drawn down from reserves this year and more substantially in future years.
- Richard Baker and Helen O'Keefe were thanked for their work on the budget.
- Councillor Broach was thanked for his work on the budget.

RESOLVED

(27 voting for, 0 against and 8 abstentions)

Voting For: Cllr Birleson, Cllr Bonfante, Cllr Bonkur, Cllr Gardner, Cllr Gilbert, Cllr Goldwater, Cllr Grewal, Cllr Hobbs, Cllr Holloway, Cllr Jones, Cllr Marsh, Cllr Musk, Cllr Nix, Cllr Otumunye, Cllr Panter, Cllr Platt, Cllr Quinton, Cllr Rowse, Cllr Scott, Cllr Shah, Cllr Siewniak, Cllr Skottowe, Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Walsh, Cllr Watson, Cllr Weston, Cllr Zukowskyj.

Abstentions: Cllr Cragg, Cllr Fitzsimon, Cllr Kingsbury, Cllr Lass, Cllr Michaelides, Cllr Mitchinson, Cllr Sarson, Cllr Trigg.

That it be noted that the 2025/26 General Fund budget as approved by the Council meeting on 3 February is shown in Appendix A.

Council
25 February 2025

That it be noted that the following amounts for the year 2025/26 were agreed in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act").

- a) The gross 2025/26 Tax base for the Borough is 44,517.5 equivalent Band D properties before the application of a collection rate.
- b) 44,250.4 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations), as its Council Tax Base for the year 2025/26; including deductions for council tax support and a collection rate of 99.4%.
- c) Part of the Council's Area being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;

	100% TAXBASE	99.40% TAXBASE
Ayot St Lawrence	68.3	67.9
Ayot St Peter	114.2	113.5
Essendon	436.9	434.3
Hatfield	12,726.7	12,650.3
North Mymms	4,496.3	4,469.3
Northaw & Cuffley	3,139.3	3,120.5
Welwyn	4,823.4	4,794.5
Welwyn Garden City	18,089.9	17,981.3
Woolmer Green	622.5	618.8
Total	44,517.5	44,250.4

In accordance with the statutory legislation the Council is recommended to resolve:

That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2025/26 in accordance with sections 31 - 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- a) £165,489,226 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- b) £152,276,439 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- c) £13,212,787 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2.4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2.4(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- d) £298.59 being the amount at 2.4(c) above, all divided by the Council tax base at 2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
- e) £3,046,876 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- f) £229.73 being the amount at 2.4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2.4(e) by 2.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.
- g) Part of the Council's area:

Council
25 February 2025

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2.4(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 2.2(c) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

Band D Amount £	
Ayot St Lawrence	241.51
Ayot St Peter	267.17
Essendon	373.31
Hatfield	340.73
North Mymms	286.27
Northaw & Cuffley	323.14
Welwyn	336.40
Welwyn Garden City	256.83
Woolmer Green	282.08

h) Part of the Council's Area:

Amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2.4(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

Valuation Bands (£)	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ayot St Lawrence	161.01	187.84	214.68	241.51	295.18	348.85	402.52	483.02
Ayot St Peter	178.11	207.80	237.48	267.17	326.54	385.91	445.28	534.34
Essendon	248.87	290.35	331.83	373.31	456.27	539.23	622.18	746.62
Hatfield	227.15	265.01	302.87	340.73	416.45	492.17	567.88	681.46
North Mymms	190.85	222.65	254.46	286.27	349.89	413.50	477.12	572.54
Northaw & Cuffley	215.43	251.33	287.24	323.14	394.95	466.76	538.57	646.28
Welwyn	224.27	261.64	299.02	336.40	411.16	485.91	560.67	672.80
Welwyn Garden City	171.22	199.76	228.29	256.83	313.90	370.98	428.05	513.66
Woolmer Green	188.05	219.40	250.74	282.08	344.76	407.45	470.13	564.16

That it be noted that for the year 2025/26 the major precepting authorities, Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire have stated the amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the following tables.

Council
25 February 2025

Hertfordshire County Council (£)								
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ayot St Lawrence	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Ayot St Peter	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Essendon	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Hatfield	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
North Mymms	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Northaw & Cuffley	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Welwyn	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Welwyn Garden City	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74
Woolmer Green	1,179.91	1,376.56	1,573.22	1,769.87	2,163.18	2,556.48	2,949.78	3,539.74

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire (£)								
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ayot St Lawrence	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Ayot St Peter	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Essendon	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Hatfield	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
North Mymms	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Northaw & Cuffley	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Welwyn	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00
Welwyn Garden City	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00

Council
25 February 2025

Part of the Council's Area (£)								
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ayot St Lawrence	1,517.59	1,770.51	2,023.46	2,276.38	2,782.25	3,288.11	3,793.97	4,552.00
Ayot St Peter	1,534.69	1,790.47	2,046.26	2,302.04	2,813.61	3,325.17	3,836.73	4,604.00
Essendon	1,605.45	1,873.02	2,140.61	2,408.18	2,943.34	3,478.49	4,013.63	4,816.00
Hatfield	1,583.73	1,847.68	2,111.65	2,375.60	2,903.52	3,431.43	3,959.33	4,751.00
North Mymms	1,547.43	1,805.32	2,063.24	2,321.14	2,836.96	3,352.76	3,868.57	4,642.00
Northaw & Cuffley	1,572.01	1,834.00	2,096.02	2,358.01	2,882.02	3,406.02	3,930.02	4,716.00
Welwyn	1,580.85	1,844.31	2,107.80	2,371.27	2,898.23	3,425.17	3,952.12	4,742.00
Welwyn Garden City	1,527.80	1,782.43	2,037.07	2,291.70	2,800.97	3,310.24	3,819.50	4,583.00
Woolmer Green	1,544.63	1,802.07	2,059.52	2,316.95	2,831.83	3,346.71	3,861.58	4,633.00
Woolmer Green	176.67	206.11	235.56	265.00	323.89	382.78	441.67	530.00

That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.4(h) and 2.5 (a) and (b) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2025/26 for each part of its area and for each category of dwellings.

Meeting ended at 7.41 pm