

COUNCIL BUDGET/COUNCIL TAX MEETING

4 March 2009

(7.15pm – 10.03pm)

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor Martin Whelton
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Krysia Williams
Councillors Tariq Ahmad, Agatha Akyigyina, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stephen Austin, Mark Betteridge, John Bowcott, Margaret Brierly, William Brierly, Jeremy Bruce, Angela Caldara, Richard Chellew, David Chung, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Chris Edge, Corinna Edge, Karin Forbes, Samantha George, Maurice Groves, Marc Hanson, Philip Jones, Andrew Judge, Stephen Kerin, Linda Kirby, Sheila Knight, Patricia Lewis, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Edith Macauley, Russell Makin, Barbara Mansfield, Denise March, Maxi Martin, Peter McCabe, Krystal Miller, Oonagh Moulton, Ian Munn, Diane Neil Mills, Henry Nelles, Dennis Pearce, George Reynolds, Judy Saunders, Linda Scott, Rod Scott, Deborah Shears, David Simpson, Zenia Squires-Jamison, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Gregory Udeh, Leighton Veale, David Williams, Richard Williams, Ronald Wilson and Simon Withey

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Jonathan Warne

1 MINUTES (Agenda Item 2)

RESOLVED: That, subject to the amendment detailed below, the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 4 February 2009 are agreed as a correct record:

Amendment

Agenda Item 6 – Questions from Councillors – Question No.8 –
Supplementary Question put by Councillor Patricia Lewis:

insert “Merton Racial Equality Partnership” after “FISH” in the last line.

2 DECLARATIONS (Agenda Item 3)

Declarations were made as follows:

Agenda Item 4

Councillor Dennis Pearce on the basis of his Chairing Friends in St Helier Day Care for the Elderly on the St Helier Estate.

Councillor Sheila Knight on the basis of her being an employee with Merton MIND, a Council grant aided organisation.

Councillor Gregory Udeh on the basis of her being an employee with Merton MIND, a Council grant aided organisation.

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3 ANNOUNCEMENTS (non-specified item)

Suspension of Constitutional Requirement

The Mayor sought the endorsement of the Council, duly agreed, to suspend the constitutional requirement governing the order of business in so far as to allow the taking of announcements.

Mayor

The Mayor thanked all those who had attended his recent theatre evening and the Mayoral Ball held at the All England Tennis Club both events raising significant sums for his charities i.e. Wimbledon Guild and the Vine Project.

He also advised of forthcoming events:

details to be provided in respect a fund raising event on St Patrick's night on Friday 20 March;

details to be provided to all members in respect of the St George's day tea party; and his last charitable event to be held on 1 May comprising a race night at Drake House.

The Mayor also encourage members to complete nomination forms in respect of the Merton Civic Awards scheme.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive announced that, following the outcome of the CPA results, Merton has been awarded a 4 star rating and is considered to be an authority that is 'improving strongly'. He advised that Merton is now one of only eleven authorities in London to have achieved this level. He placed on record his sincere appreciation to both members and officers.

Councillors David Williams, Andrew Judge and Peter Southgate endorsed the comments made by the Chief Executive.

Councillor David Williams expressed the view that the Council is well placed to take forward a value for money programme of change. The Chief Executive was personally thanked for his efforts in securing the Council's rating.

4 BUDGET 2009/10, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2009-2012,
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009-12 AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2009-12
(Agenda Item 4)

The Council's Director of Corporate Services addressed the meeting detailing the key considerations around the construction of the proposed budget. The Director also responded to a number of questions put by members.

The Chair invited members of the Cabinet to make remarks on the report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Williams, made his budget speech, the content of which is set out below.

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Mr Mayor

The Government has put off its annual budget date but still requires local councils to fix theirs by 11 March. In Merton we do that tonight and we are recommending an increase of 1.9% - the lowest rise for 15 years.

I cannot recall a set of economic circumstances so volatile and unpredictable. When we first set down the initial budget proposals in October, we did not know that inflation was about to peak with CPI at 5.2% and RPI at 5% for September, which is the reference rate we have used to cap our council tax increase in the previous two years. From 1 April 2009 pensions and other benefits will rise by 5% but the Merton element in the council tax will go up by just half that amount at 2.5%.

This Administration has pledged itself to support the Conservative Party's national policy on council tax and if there had been a change in Government, the effect of the rise we recommend tonight would have been 0%.

It is clear that the Government's funding formula for London is bust. 24 of the 32 London boroughs are on the floor and using the current methodology, Merton will not be off the floor until 2020-2021. So no extra money here for grand promises made in Westminster by Ministers. Just 1.75% or £962,000 extra in Merton in 2009-10 but in the constituency of John Healey, Minister of State for Local Government in Rotherham, they are getting an extra 4.27% or £4.873m. The Labour Party in this Council and the MP for Mitcham & Morden should be diverting their energies to help people of this borough get a decent deal out of the Government that has turned its back on London.

Two years ago, Councillor Alambritis shredded one of his shirts to illustrate one of his political gimmicks, but this year he has simply surrendered common sense on the altar of "she who must be obeyed". They pretend there is a pot of gold - hidden in the basement of the Civic Centre - that he and his colleagues can dish out to council tax payers like Robin Hood but they couldn't even get the recommended rise right in literature they sprayed round Mitcham & Morden.

The simple truth is that Councillor Alambritis couldn't even get his facts right in last week's local paper when he said that we are adding £3m to reserves in 2009-10. He either hasn't read his papers or been properly briefed. We are not making any further contributions to reserves, but have made provision for a contingency of £2m to meet in year budget variations and protect council tax payers' services.

I cannot understand how Councillor Alambritis manages to take a contradictory position in his political life and offer advice on council tax which he would not give to small businesses in his day job. I have some advice for Councillor Alambritis. He should stick with his day job.

In the meantime, we'll get on with running the Council and, although it's an uncomfortable fact, we're really quite good at it. We took over a 2 star council and from tomorrow the Labour Government's independent Audit Commission have deemed us to be a 4 star Authority, "improving strongly".

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This achievement is the consequence of a great deal of hard work by officers and strong leadership from the Corporate Management Team but there was no inevitability about the outcome. We have set the right political environment to continue to improve our performance and levels of service to the public and will continue to do so at an affordable price.

Delivery is as important as quality and it is clear from this budget round that we have virtually exhausted remaining opportunities to salami slice our budgets without affecting front line services. In the coming year we will have to make significant decisions about structural change and the associated budgetary implications, if we are to continue to keep council tax rises to a minimum.

It is an uncomfortable fact that the council must seek value for money in every corner of its expenditure and maximise its income opportunities, for there is no other way to manage our limited budget. There are 8 authorities in Outer London with a higher council tax than Merton (and "9" with a recommended increase greater than 2.5%) we receive the third lowest level of grants per head in London at £788, far less than Hammersmith & Fulham with £1,822.60? Only Havering and Kingston get less and even the average for Outer London is £1207.66. So, when it comes to giving out our own grants, they are not just handouts of public money, given out of the kindness of our hearts to favoured groups.

The heart of commentary from Labour Councillors about MREP, EMC, the Asian Elderly and FISH is a contradiction, coupled with deliberate misinformation. Let me make it plain, we do not dish out public money on grounds of ethnicity nor do we take it away on grounds of ethnicity. To do either would be discriminatory and Councillor Macauley's inflammatory comments in her letter to last week's Guardian, where she said "The Tory council cutting funding to three minority ethnic organisations can't be a coincidence" is both unwelcome, uncharacteristic and raises a dangerous political card.

Members opposite know quite well – as illustrated in several private conversations – that the process to evaluate grant applications was open, transparent and colligate in that it was agreed with and implemented by the voluntary sector themselves in line with Government guidelines. If the Government is wrong, if the guidelines are wrong, if the evaluation was biased then I have yet to hear anybody make that allegation.

The appeals I heard did not bring forward any new information that was not in front of the Grants Panel in December and I am not prepared to disadvantage other voluntary groups to support the groups that failed to meet the criteria set. I challenge the Labour Party here and now in tonight's debate, to say if they support a quality voluntary sector or simply wish to play political games to suit their agenda.

Why it is that the Labour Party in Merton get their nicest councillors to write the nastiest letters and why they then sign them is beyond my comprehension.

What I do know is that this budget round was difficult but has passed the test of scrutiny. Some of the issues I have raised already were not challenged in scrutiny, indeed in some instances they were positively supported. We have sought to protect

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services and there are year on year pound for pound actual increases in the amount we are planning to spend on

Adult Care Services

Looked After Children

Community Engagement

Tackling Homelessness

Cabinet colleagues and other Councillors on this side of the chamber will talk to some of these changes in detail but in conclusion I would like to thank the Director of Corporate Services and all her staff in the Finance team as well as the Chief Executive, other Directors and their staff, for the enormous effort required in preparing the budget papers. I would also like to thank the Deputy Leader, Councillor Samantha George and colleagues for the hours of work they too have put in to the process.

Mr Mayor, the lowest rise in council tax for 15 years is still a rise but the budget papers illustrate that we continue to strive to improve services from an excellent base. We are well equipped to meet the many challenges that yet lie ahead, we are strong in our conviction that we are delivering value for money and I recommend this budget to the Council.

Concluding his speech, Councillor David Williams moved and Councillor Samantha George seconded the recommendations detailed in the submitted report.

Councillor Stephen Alambritis made his budget speech the content of which is set out below (summary version)

(Councillor Stephen set the scene on the lines of the BBC's Strictly Come Dancing) but this is more like the Tory version, namely Strictly come financing, with David Williams partnering Samantha George!

I know they have been rehearsing furiously for this. The Leaders Policy Group meeting to put this tawdry budget to bed with his colleagues on 9 February went on until 11:19pm

This Budget, this Deloitte's Budget is ill conceived, based on ill gotten gains and will make residents in this borough ill with worry about how they are going to make ends meet

This budget proposes an increase of 2.5% in the council tax when RPI (Real Peoples Increase) today is a mere 0.1% and falling

I can point the Tories to Labour Councils that that have frozen their CT

But I don't want to do that because that is playing politics so I will point to Tory Councils instead

This Budget has the meanest of cuts to front line services and my deputy and other

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colleagues will go into these unnecessary cuts in greater detail

This Budget is ripe for challenge in the courts by voluntary groups. The awful decision to impose a funding cut on MREP was made on 23 Dec 08. The Equality Impact Assessment was not done until 14 Jan 09..a clear breach of Section 71 of the RRA 1976

You cannot ignore front page Headlines in our leading local newspapers such as the one screaming CASH CUTS FURY at you

I talked about how this budget has been crafted on ill gotten gains

Merton Council pockets VAT cash!!

School funding cut because Merton Council can't do sums

Increase in cemetery charges by 20% and a brand new charge of £45 to find out the burial place of a loved one

In the run up to the 2012 Olympics what do the Tories do? Increase track and sports hire by 7%

Is this the kind of budget that Tory big beast Eric Pickles likes and was referring to when he asked Conservative Cllrs to " Get in touch with their inner Tory"

And this may worry our CEO. Mr Pickles also asked Tory cllrs to question whether they really needed a chief executive! Why not share your highest paid officers he urged- one for Deloitte no doubt!

These are serious times calling for unprecedented measures

What we have in this budget is a money merrygoround...a strictly come budgeting routine from the Leader and Deputy Leader

Let's see marks for this Tory Budget routine before us and if it is not Nil pious I shall tear up my shirt, again!

Councillor Peter Southgate made his budget speech the content of which is set out below.

This has been one of the most difficult budget setting exercises because of the unprecedented deterioration in the financial situation, and now in the wider economy, that has taken place since we started scrutinising it six months ago. We have had to accept a far greater degree of fluidity and late changes than in previous years, so that the budget before us tonight has changed significantly since it was last seen by scrutiny at the end of January. But as I say, these are unprecedented times.

Looking at the big picture, it is refreshing to see that we have at last broken with the silo mentality of requiring every department to offer savings of 5% and 10% regardless of the pressures they face. There has been a significant redistribution of resources in favour of Community and Housing, so that this portfolio shows net growth after savings of **£663,000**, whereas other departments (especially Corporate Services) contribute far more in savings than they require for growth items.

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Moreover this growth in the Community and Housing portfolio is scheduled to continue beyond next year into 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Growth is in response to demographic pressures; we have more vulnerable adults requiring care – sometimes very expensive care. These are not just older people but also those with learning difficulties, and they are all living longer. This is not unique to Merton, it is a problem for every authority, but until we gain some recognition from central government of the funding pressures it imposes, we have to make provision for it, and it is better to be proactive than reactive as we have been too often in the past. Indeed there is still an element of catching up to be done; more than half the savings (55%) proposed by Community and Health in the current year will not be achieved. However, let that not detract from the fact that this is definitely the right thing to do; making adequate provision for vulnerable minorities may not show up in higher satisfaction ratings on the Annual Residents Survey, but we have a duty of care for everyone, and especially for those unable to care for themselves.

Scrutiny expressed concern over the proposal to forego growth in social workers' salaries, and we are pleased that the executive agreed to restore this, together with keeping the related administrative support posts. Yesterday brought more news of the difficulty of recruiting social workers to posts in London boroughs in the wake of the 'Baby P' tragedy, and I have little doubt that this growth will be needed before long, if we are not to become over dependent on expensive agency staff.

Cabinet did not accept all scrutiny's recommendations, and the Commission regrets the decision to forego planned growth in the youth service. The evidence coming forward from the 'Fear of Crime' review is that we need more activities to divert youths who are otherwise at risk of being drawn into the gang culture. We have been quite successful in combatting gang culture in Merton to date, but the threat shows no signs of going away.

In the circumstances it is as well that the budget proposes to increase the contingency fund by £400,000 to £2m. One of the consequences of the recession we are only just beginning to see is a degree of civil unrest, and a rising level of benefit fraud and crime driven by financial hardship may follow, plus homelessness and mental health problems arising from repossessions. We need to be ready to respond to this and we may need additional resources to do it.

Returning to the big picture, I want to draw your attention to a table with the uninviting title of 'Technical and Corporate Adjustments' on p.71. In most years we breathe a sigh of relief when the Director of Corporate Services indulges in some clever financial engineering and produces the savings we're looking for to close the gap, thus avoiding further unpalatable cuts to our services. It's the accountant's version of a victimless crime. However, I need you to focus on four items – the collection fund (£0.780m.), use of section 117 monies (£0.741m.), VAT reductions (£0.400m.) and use of LABGI funds (£1.106m.) – together totalling nearly £3m. Now look at the column for 2010/11 and you'll see that the same amounts (or near equivalents) appear, only this time without the brackets. We're told these are one off savings for 2009/10. Let me spell out what that means in plain language – it means we have to

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put the money back in the till for 2010/11. So we're starting the following year with a revenue gap of £14.5m. which compares with a revenue gap of £8.3m. when we began scrutinising the budget back in October last year. We've raised the hurdle that we face from the start of next year's budgetary round by £6.2m. About half of that is unavoidable, for example as the income from our investments falls. But borrowing £3m. from 2010/11 may start to look very short sighted a year from now.

You can draw many conclusions from this, and it may not be the worst option if the alternative is drastic cuts in services which are already close to the bone. For many years we've cut services and then behaved as though we expect them to grow back, to replenish themselves like some multi headed hydra, all ready for the next round of cuts next year. Only of course they don't grow back.

It's clear that we've reached the end of the road with this approach to budget setting; if ever there were a case to be made for the Merton efficiency project, then this budget is it. At the end of the budget report on p.95 I read:

"As indicated in the updated MTFs, there is a gap between the forecast level of resources and budget requirements for 2010/11 and 2011/12 which will need to be addressed if balanced budgets are to be set."

Indeed so – the restrained language underplays the urgent need to get to grips with the situation. It's evident that we can't carry on as we have been, although we should be cautious about building our expectations too high for the efficiency project to deliver us from this predicament in one bound.

Finally, I want to say something about the way in which party politics impacts on the budgetary process, and in particular the competitive focus on the rate of increase in council tax. In the topsy turvy world that is party politics in Merton, where Cllr. Allison woos the right wing of the Conservative group with the promise of distributing the council's reserves, we are in danger of focussing on this figure to the exclusion of practically everything else. By choosing to compete on such a narrow turf, we run the risk of driving the electorate straight into the arms of the Taxpayers Alliance, were they to put up candidates at the next election.

Between the final round of scrutiny and the budget we have before us this evening, the rate of increase in council tax has been reduced from an imputed 3.4% to 2.5%. I'm sure it makes for a good headline to be able to claim the lowest increase in 15 years, but does it actually make a difference? The effect of that reduction of just under 1% is to reduce the increase for a Band D council taxpayer by £5.45¹ – that's not £5.45 a month, it's £5.45 over the whole year.

In the feverish political atmosphere of this chamber, we are in danger of losing sight of what could really make a difference to people's lives. We should be talking about the services we want to provide, we should be affirming the value of those services as well as their cost. Unfortunately this doesn't come encapsulated in a single index

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figure – but let us beware of taking simplification too far.

Subsequent to the meeting Councillor Peter Southgate identified with due apology an inadvertent error: ¹ This figure was incorrectly calculated – the correct figure is £9.82.

Labour Motion

At this juncture in the proceedings the Labour Group put the following motion:

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Alambritis and seconded by Councillor Mark Betteridge that:

Council acknowledges the unprecedented economic circumstances Merton residents find themselves in due to the global economic crisis.

Council further notes that the General Fund Budget and Council Tax Strategy Report estimates that Merton Council's reserves will stand at £11.4m by 31/03/2009. Furthermore, the proposed General Fund Budget includes an additional £2m in unallocated "contingency".

Council condemns this administration for ignoring the needs of local people and the failure to re-direct some of this £13.4m through a £100 council tax rebate to residents.

Council further condemns this administration for proposing to inflict on residents a 2.5% increase in council tax at a time when RPI inflation has fallen to 0.1% and is predicted to move into deflation during the coming financial year.

Point of Order

Following further debate, Councillor David Williams enquired of the Mayor as to the order of events and, in particular, as to whether the Council was now debating the substantive report or the motion.

In consideration of this matter, the Mayor put the motion as moved and seconded to the meeting and a roll call was requested with the following result:

Voting for the motion 26: Councillors Agatha Akyigyina, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stephen Austin, Mark Betteridge, David Chung, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Philip Jones, Andrew Judge, Linda Kirby, Sheila Knight, Patricia Lewis, Edith Macauley, Russell Makin, Maxi Martin, Peter McCabe, Ian Munn, Dennis Pearce, George Reynolds, Judy Saunders, Zenia Squires-Jamison, Geraldine Stanford, Gregory Udeh, Leighton Veale, Richard Williams.

Voting against the motion 32: Councillors Tariq Ahmad, John Bowcott, Margaret Brierly, William Brierly, Jeremy Bruce, Angela Caldara, Richard Chellew, David Dean, Chris Edge, Corinna Edge, Karin Forbes, Samantha George, Maurice Groves, Marc Hanson, Stephen Kerin, Brian Lewis-Lavender, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Barbara Mansfield, Denise March, Krystal Miller, Diane Neil Mills, Oonagh Moulton, Henry Nelles, Linda Scott, Rod Scott, Deborah Shears, David Simpson, Peter Southgate, David Williams, Krysia Williams, Ronald Wilson and Simon Withey.

Abstentions: 1 (the Mayor)

The Mayor declared the motion to be lost.

Council continued to debate the substantive business following which the Mayor put the recommendations contained in the submitted report and it was

RESOLVED: That (1), on a vote of 29 for the recommendations and 25 against approval is given to:

- the General Fund Budget;
- the Council Tax Strategy for 2009/10, being an increase in 2009/10 of 2.5% for the local element (equating to a Band D Council Tax of £1,118.78);
- the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2009-2012;
- the Capital Investment Programme;
- the Capital Strategy (Appendix 14);
- the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 15), incorporating the Prudential Indicators.

as set out in this report, and approval is given to the formal resolutions as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report **and as reproduced at the foot of these minutes as Appendix 1;**

(2) approval is given to the addition of the 2008/09 budget for Single Status to the earmarked reserve of £2.2m at 31/03/08, as set out in paragraph 3.13 of the submitted report, and to the transfer of the resulting £3.2m into a revenue budget in 2009/10 to enable the Single Status Agreement to be implemented during 2009/10, along with the transfer of other earmarked reserves (paragraph 3.13.8) to revenue budgets to enable them to be released for the purpose for which they were set aside for; and note that, in regard to the Transformation programme in particular, Members will be involved in budget decisions relating to the transformation programme.

5 BUSINESS PLAN 2009-2012 (Agenda Item 5)

It was moved by Councillor Samantha George, seconded by Councillor David Williams and

RESOLVED: That (1), approval is given to the Business Plan 2009-12 as part of the budget and policy framework, including the text and the package of priorities, planned outcomes, performance measures and targets that together will form the published version of the Plan; and

(2) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, is given delegated authority to amend the Business Plan 2009-12 should this be

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required.

6 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET – REVENUE AND CAPITAL
2009/10 (Agenda Item 6)

It was moved by Councillor Linda Scott and seconded by Councillor Diane Neil Mills
and

RESOLVED: That approval is given to the 2009/10 HRA Budget – revenue
and capital noting in particular:

- the 2009/10 growth pressures and savings/income generation proposals
as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report
 - the 2009/10 HRA capital programme as set out in Appendix 2 to the
submitted report
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APPENDIX 1

RESOLUTIONS

Revenue Report:

1. That having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission set out in Appendix 2 to the revenue report, approval is given to the proposed budget for 2009/10 set out in Appendix 9 of the revenue report, together with the proposed Council Tax levy in 2009/10.
2. That it is noted that, at its meeting on 8th December 2008, the Council calculated its **Council Tax Base for the year as 73,027.0** in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992.
3. That it is noted that the Council calculated the **Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Tax Base for the year as 10,709.5** 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.
4. That approval is given to 4(a) - 4(i) below, which are calculated in accordance with Section 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:
 - a) being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act

	£m
Gross Revenue Expenditure of Service Committees	308.218
Corporate Provisions	29.631
Amounts Payable to the Levying Bodies	0.989
Contribution to Financial Reserves	0.000
Gross Expenditure	338.838

- b) being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a) to (c) of the Act

	£m
Fees, charges and other income of services	173.280
Corporate investment income and technical adjustments	15.446
Total Income	188.726

NB: The final analysis of gross expenditure and income may vary from the figures shown above as a result of transfer of Learning Disability funding, use of reserves and apportionment of overheads.

- c) being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year

	£m
Total Net General Fund Expenditure	150.112

- d) being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of revenue support grant and redistributed non-domestic rates

	£m
Revenue Support Grant	12.518
NNDR	54.233
Total	66.751

- e) being the amount at 4(c) above, less the amount at 4(d) above calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year

	£m
Required yield from Merton's element of the Council Tax	83.361

- f) being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act

	£
Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Levy	260,476

- g) being the amount at 4(e) above, less the amount at 4(f) above with the result divided by the amount at 2 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, subject to (i)-(ii) below.

- i) being reduced by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the directions under section 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 2 February 1995 - **£1,400,000** or
- ii) increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its General Fund to its Collection Fund pursuant to the directions under section 98(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 2 February 1995 - **NIL**

	£
Merton's General Band D Council Tax Levy	1,118.78

- h) being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(g) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in the area of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) mentioned above at 4(f) divided by the amount at 3 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 the area of WPCC.

	£
Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Band D Levy	1,143.10

- i) being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(g) and 4(h) 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							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Part of the Councils Area	745.85	870.16	994.47	1,118.78	1,367.40	1,616.02	1,864.63	2,237.56
Parts inc. WPCC	762.07	889.08	1,016.09	1,143.10	1,397.12	1,651.14	1,905.17	2,286.20

5. That the Council agrees the Council Tax levy for 2009/2010 by taking the aggregate of 4(i) above and the Greater London Authority precept.

Precepting Authority	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
G L A	206.55	240.97	275.40	309.82	378.67	447.52	516.37	619.64

For information purposes this would result in the following Council Tax Levy for Merton residents:-

Part of the Council's Area	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Part of the Council's Area	952.40	1,111.13	1,269.87	1,428.60	1,746.07	2,063.54	2,381.00	2,857.20
Parts inc. WPC	968.62	1,130.05	1,291.49	1,452.92	1,775.79	2,098.66	2,421.54	2,905.84