

Council – 7 January 2013

Council Tax Base 2013/14

Service: Finance

Wards: All

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report recommends that the council tax base for 2013/14 be set at 60,664.11 band D equivalents. The authority is legally obliged to set the council tax base by 31 January each year and to notify the precepting authorities (i.e.: Police and Fire & Civil Defence Authorities) accordingly. This report includes the effects of the recommended changes in council tax exemptions and the council tax support scheme which are also on tonight's agenda.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Council are recommended to set the council tax base for 2013/14 at 60,664.11 band D equivalents.
- 2.2 Council delegate to the Chief Financial Officer authority to approve any final changes to the council tax base in order to inform preceptors of the final figures by 31 January 2013, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Personnel. Final figures will be reported to Council on 21 February 2013 within the budget report.

3. Report detail

- 3.1 Council tax base figures are calculated by billing authorities and notified to relevant precept authorities and levying bodies between 1 December and 31 January of the financial year preceding the financial year to which it will apply.
- 3.2 Council tax records on 1 December 2012 show 108,469 chargeable dwellings. The equivalent of a further 556 new properties are estimated as due for occupation in 2013/14 and no demolitions predicted. These changes will result in a total of 109,025 properties. Exemptions and personal discounts including the discounts in relation to the introduction of the council tax support scheme reduce this to 72,074.32. Most Walsall dwellings are in the lower bands, so the tax base (band D equivalents) is 61,587.93. The council tax base for 2013/14 is therefore set at 60,664.11 band D equivalents (78,898.20 2012/13), based on a collection rate of 98.5%, which provides for 1.5% non-collection and changes in assessments.

3.3 **Table 1** shows the number of chargeable dwellings (properties) in each band.

Table 1 – No of chargeable dwellings (per band)									
BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Properties	48,340	25,121	17,415	9,743	5,351	2,285	718	52	109,025
%age	44.34	23.04	15.97	8.93	4.91	2.10	0.66	0.05	100
Cumulative	44.34	67.38	83.35	92.28	97.19	99.29	99.95	100	

3.4 **Table 2** shows the movement from the number of chargeable dwellings to the number of band D equivalents which is required to set the council tax base.

Table 2 – Movement in chargeable dwellings to council tax base									
BAND	A*	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Chargeable Dwellings	48,340	25,121	17,415	9,743	5,351	2,285	718	52	109,025
Discounts and exemptions	26,291	6,990	2,451	722	312	116	52	17	36,951
Net dwellings	22,049	18,131	14,964	9,021	5,039	2,169	666	35	72,074
Band D equivalent weightings	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
Band D equivalents	14,691	14,102	13,301	9,021	6,159	3,133	1,111	70	61,587.93

4. Council priorities

4.1 The council tax base is required to calculate the annual council tax. Council tax is a key source of funding to the council, which impacts on the budget process

5. Risk management

5.1 The actual collection rate reflects the council's success in collecting council tax due. If the actual collection rate is lower than the assumed rate used in these calculations, this could result in a collection fund deficit, requiring an increase in the following year's council tax. Conversely, a higher collection rate performance will increase the surplus and therefore potentially marginally reduce the following year's council tax level.

6. Financial implications

6.1 The council tax base is required to calculate the annual council tax and is used by Government departments in their calculations i.e. in calculating council, tax freeze grant and new homes bonus grant due to the authority.

7. Legal implications

7.1 The collection fund and council tax base are governed by Statutory Instrument 2012 No.2914 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. We are legally obliged to set the council tax base and notify the precepting authorities by 31 January each year.

8. Property implications

8.1 None directly associated with this report.

9. Staffing implications

9.1 None directly associated with this report.

10. Equality implications

10.1 None directly associated with this report.

11. Consultation

11.1 The report is prepared in consultation with relevant managers and the CFO.

Background papers: Various financial working papers.

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