

**Public
Key Decision - Yes**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Council Tax Base 2024/25

Meeting/Date: Chair of Corporate Governance Committee and Section 151 Officer –14 December 2023

Executive Portfolio: Councillor B Mickelburgh – Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources

Report by: Revenues and Benefits Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The calculation of the Council Tax base is a statutory requirement that sets the number of band D equivalent dwellings liable for Council Tax after allowing for the impact of discounts, exemptions, Council Tax Support and any additional premiums. An estimate of growth in property numbers and an allowance for non-collection is also required as part of the calculation, which is used by precepting authorities when setting Council Tax precepts.

Consideration is currently being given to changing the Council's Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25. As Council Tax Support is calculated as a reduction to the Council Tax Base, the decision to set the Tax Base cannot be taken until after the decision regarding Council Tax Support.

In light of this, and in order to allow sufficient consideration of the Tax Base calculation, two versions of the Tax Base have been compiled with the impact of Council Tax Support being reflected for both current and proposed schemes.

Recommendation(s):

The Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee and the Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer are

RECOMMENDED

to approve the Council Tax Base as set out in either Option 1, or Option 2, in line with the Council Tax Support decision taken by Council on 13th December 2023.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set the Council Tax Base for 2023/24 as required by Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires Billing Authorities to calculate and approve a Tax Base for the District as a whole and for each separate Town and Parish Council within the District. Precepting Authorities must be notified of the outcome by 31 January each year.

3. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 3.1 The process for calculating the council tax base is set out within regulations. The number of properties contained within the valuation list is adjusted for the impact of discounts, exemptions, premiums and Council Tax Support. An estimate for growth in property numbers, and an allowance for non-collection also forms part of the calculation.
- 3.2 Data has been extracted from the Council Tax database to inform the calculation, which alongside information from the Planning team, the Council Tax property inspector and where possible, property developers, is used to compile the Taxbase figures.
- 3.3 The forecast for growth in new properties has reduced from what was forecast last year, following a pattern also anticipated within the Housing Trajectory compiled by the Planning team. In addition, anecdotal evidence from developers suggests continued uncertainty regarding build rates, as the industry continues to be impacted by availability of materials, workforce and consumer confidence following increased interest rates.
- 3.4 Proposals for a revised Council Tax Support scheme are progressing through the Council's decision-making process, and a final decision is expected to be made by Council on 13th December 2023.
- 3.5 Council Tax Support (CTS), along with other Council Tax discounts and exemptions, is calculated as a reduction to the taxbase, and so in anticipation of the CTS decision being taken, two options for taxbase have been prepared for consideration, as follows:

	OPTION 1 - CURRENT CTS SCHEME	OPTION 2 - UPDATED CTS SCHEME
Taxbase at 6 th November 2023, inclusive of Contributions in lieu (MOD)	69,539.5	69,539.5
Adjustment for properties attracting a premium / receiving annexe discount	174.3	174.3
Initial Taxbase	69,713.8	69,713.8
Growth forecast- remainder of 2023/24	342	342
Growth forecast – 2024/25	611	611
Impact of discounts	<u>-179.7</u>	<u>-179.7</u>
Subtotal	70,487.1	70,487.1
Council Tax Support	-3,521.9	-3,992.7
Bad debt provision 0.6%	<u>-401.6</u>	<u>-398.5</u>
2024 / 25 Taxbase	66,563.6	66,095.9
2023/24 Taxbase	65,795	65,795
Difference (Band D equivalents)	768.6	300.9

- 3.6 An allowance of 0.6% for non-collection has been included within the calculation. This remains the same as in previous years as it is still considered to be reasonable.
- 3.7 The Tax Base figure is used to calculate the council tax charge for each major precepting authority and for local councils, i.e. towns and parishes for 2024/25. Appendix A shows how the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 is apportioned across the town and parish councils should the decision be taken that the Council Tax Support scheme remains the same, whilst Appendix B shows the taxbase across all town and parish councils should the proposed Council Tax Support scheme be adopted.

4. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The regulations stipulate that the Tax Base must be approved between 1 December and 31 January in the preceding financial year.
- 4.2 All major preceptors will be advised of the Tax Base figure by 31 January deadline (including a split by Flood Defence Area for the County Council). Similarly, all local councils will receive confirmation of their precept request, their respective Tax Base and Band D level for 2024/25.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The Tax Base must be calculated in accordance with regulations, but it is fundamental in establishing the level of Council Tax charged to local residents and consequently has budgetary implications impacting the priorities and objectives of HDC.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has a legal obligation to set the Council Tax Base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The 2023/24 Taxbase was set at 65,795. The resource implications for both options outlined would be as follows:

OPTION 1

A taxbase of 66,563.6 would be an increase of 768.6 band D equivalent properties. This would equate to an increase in income of around £119,794 based on the current band D charge of £155.86

OPTION 2

A taxbase of 66,095.9 would be an increase of 300.9 band D equivalent properties. This would equate to an increase in income of around £46,898 based on the current band D charge of £155.86

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 8.1 The Council is required to set a tax base for each financial year, for both the district as a whole and for each Town and Parish Council with its boundaries.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – 2024/25 Tax Base Calculation by Town / Parish Council area – current Council Tax Support scheme

Appendix B – 2024/25 Tax Base Calculation by Town / Parish Council area – updated Council Tax Support scheme

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OPTION 1 – Current Council Tax Support Scheme

Decision of the Chief Financial Officer	
I hereby set the Council Tax Base for Huntingdonshire District at 66,563.6, for the financial year 2024/25. I also set the Council Tax base for each Town and Parish Council contained within the boundaries of Huntingdonshire District as set out in the attached APPENDIX A	
Signed	Date
Director of Finance / s151	
Signed	Date
Chair - Corporate Governance Committee	

OPTION 2 – Updated Council Tax Support Scheme

Decision of the Chief Financial Officer	
I hereby set the Council Tax Base for Huntingdonshire District at 66,095.9, for the financial year 2024/25. I also set the Council Tax base for each Town and Parish Council contained within the boundaries of Huntingdonshire District as set out in the attached APPENDIX B	
Signed	Date
Director of Finance / s151	
Signed	Date
Chair - Corporate Governance Committee	

Appendix A

2024/25 Tax Base Calculation by Town / Parish Council area: with Council Tax Support scheme unchanged

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amounts calculated by the Huntingdonshire District Council as their (net) Tax Base for the whole District for the year 2024/25 be 66,563.6 and shall be as listed below for each Town and Parish of the District:

Abbots Ripton	140.2	Holme	252.2
Abbotsley	273.1	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	1109
Alconbury	551.1	Houghton & Wyton	824.1
Alconbury Weston	298.5	Huntingdon	7764.6
Alwalton	127.7	Kimbolton	614.9
Barham & Woolley	29	Kings Ripton	84
Bluntisham	778	Leighton Bromswold	82
Brampton	2549.6	Little Paxton	1695.7
Brington & Molesworth	192.4	Morborne	12.3
Broughton	102.6	Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	536.5
Buckden	1339.9	Old Weston	108.3
Buckworth	53.7	Oldhurst	104.7
Bury	786.9	Perry	259.6
Bythorn & Keyston	157.4	Pidley-cum-Fenton	200.5
Catworth	162.9	Ramsey	3240.4
Chesterton	68.1	Sawtry	2075.9
Colne	392.1	Sibson-cum-Stibbington	232
Conington	74.4	Somersham	1423.1
Covington	47.1	Southoe & Midloe	156.9
Denton & Caldecote	30	Spaldwick	258.5
Earith	607.4	St.Ives	6082.1
Easton	86.7	St.Neots	11636.1
Ellington	242.1	Stilton	824.3
Elton	300.3	Stow Longa	70.4
Farcet	540.4	The Stukeleys	1333.5
Fenstanton	1347.3	Tilbrook	131.1
Folksworth & Washingley	349.1	Toseland	36.8
Glatton	138.1	Upton and Coppingford	90.4
Godmanchester	3190.2	Upwood and the Raveleys	450.8
Grafham	235.9	Warboys	1610.7
Great & Little Gidding	130.2	Waresley-cum-Tetworth	148.6
Great Gransden	501.1	Water Newton	39.5
Great Paxton	373	Winwick	53.5
Great Staughton	340.2	Wistow	234.1
Haddon	23.7	Woodhurst	156.4
Hail Weston	240.3	Woodwalton	84
Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	55.6	Wyton-on-the-Hill	463.5
Hemingford Abbots	328.3	Yaxley	2984.9
Hemingford Grey	1304.6	Yelling	152.5
Hilton	456		
		TOTAL	<u>66,563.6</u>

Appendix B

2024/25 Tax Base Calculation by Town / Parish Council area: with adoption of proposed Council Tax Support scheme

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amounts calculated by the Huntingdonshire District Council as their (net) Tax Base for the whole District for the year 2024/25 be 66,095.9 and shall be as listed below for each Town and Parish of the District:

Abbots Ripton	139.5	Holme	251.0
Abbotsley	272.3	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	1105.3
Alconbury	546.6	Houghton & Wyton	820.9
Alconbury Weston	297.9	Huntingdon	7687.0
Alwalton	126.1	Kimbolton	611.4
Barham & Woolley	29.0	Kings Ripton	83.9
Bluntisham	774.3	Leighton Bromswold	81.4
Brampton	2534.5	Little Paxton	1688.8
Brington & Molesworth	191.8	Morborne	12.2
Broughton	102.4	Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	533.4
Buckden	1331.6	Old Weston	107.7
Buckworth	53.7	Oldhurst	103.4
Bury	782.4	Perry	258.2
Bythorn & Keyston	157.0	Pidley-cum-Fenton	199.9
Catworth	162.3	Ramsey	3209.2
Chesterton	67.8	Sawtry	2060.7
Colne	390.6	Sibson-cum-Stibbington	231.3
Conington	73.3	Somersham	1415.2
Covington	47.1	Southoe & Midloe	156.0
Denton & Caldecote	30.0	Spaldwick	257.1
Earith	604.7	St.Ives	6040.3
Easton	86.7	St.Neots	11538.9
Ellington	240.5	Stilton	819.0
Elton	297.7	Stow Longa	70.2
Farcet	533.6	The Stukeleys	1329.1
Fenstanton	1339.4	Tilbrook	131.0
Folksworth & Washingley	348.2	Toseland	36.7
Glatton	137.9	Upton and Coppingford	90.0
Godmanchester	3164.8	Upwood and the Raveleys	448.2
Grafham	235.2	Warboys	1595.2
Great & Little Gidding	129.0	Waresley-cum-Tetworth	148.4
Great Gransden	499.5	Water Newton	39.5
Great Paxton	371.8	Winwick	53.4
Great Staughton	338.9	Wistow	232.8
Haddon	23.6	Woodhurst	155.8
Hail Weston	239.5	Woodwalton	83.4
Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	55.4	Wyton-on-the-Hill	462.6
Hemingford Abbots	327.5	Yaxley	2958.9
Hemingford Grey	1297.9	Yelling	152.1
Hilton	454.4		
		TOTAL	66,095.9