

HCTC PRESS STATEMENT  
9 DECEMBER 2003

We are pleased to hear that the pressure from the residents of Harrow has had some effect in bringing down the proposed rate of increase in Council Tax next year but there is a long way to go if our Councillors are to meet the expectation of Harrovians who do not want to see any increase above the rate of inflation.

Our Council has already inflicted unjustified increases on residents last year when they put up Council Tax by 20% making a total increase of 111% since 1997.

One has to ask why if a 6% increase in Government support this year allows a proposal to increase tax by 6-8% what the justification was for a 20% increase last year when they also got a similar 6% increase.

The level of Government support this year means that the Council needs only to make minimal gains in productivity and cost effectiveness in order to peg increases to the rate of inflation. As the Council has only been looking seriously for savings for just a few weeks it should not be difficult to achieve this target.

Taken together with the increased charge yet to be announced for London the current proposals mean that at best our Council Tax is still planned to increase by 9-10% - more than 3 times inflation!! This is totally unacceptable and HCTC will continue its campaign unabated.

All supporters should continue to cancel Direct Debits and should attend the next Council Cabinet meeting at the Civic Centre on 16 December when the public will have its first opportunity to see the proposals.

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