

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING – 22 FEBRUARY 2017

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE
CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED
IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING**

1. From Mr Petitt to the Leader of the Council - Councillor Mrs Brown

**THE FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED
BELOW**

NOTE: The Chairman will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution;
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the appropriate Members of the Cabinet or the Chairman of the Overview Select Committee
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question.
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

From Mr Petitt to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

How are people on fixed incomes going to find the extra money to pay the increased Council Tax? It is like the dark ages Prince John and Robin Hood.

Response

I understand perfectly the worry for those on fixed incomes when costs rise. Arun froze their part of the Council tax for 5 years and it was only last year that we were forced to increase it by 1.95% as our support grant from central government had been reduced by more than 40% over the last few years and we couldn't maintain a freeze any longer.

However, with the proposed increase this year the Council tax for a Band D property will only rise by 10p a week to £3.30. Although Arun collects the whole Council tax bill we only keep 11% of it and we provide all our services for that amount which I hope you will agree is really good value.

For those on fixed incomes struggling to pay their Council Tax there are a range of options available including spreading the cost over 12 months, applying for assistance under the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme or for those who are already receiving help under the scheme there is an additional discretionary fund.

We would urge any Council Tax Payer experiencing difficulty meeting their payments to make early contact with the Revenues and Benefits section to discuss their options.