

## RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

<p>This form must be completed by or on behalf of the relevant Officer immediately after any decision has been made. Please send to the Proper Officer for publication in accordance with the Council's Constitution.</p>	
<p><b>NAME OF OFFICER MAKING DECISION</b></p>	<p>Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources</p>
<p><b>SUBJECT OF DECISION BEING MADE BY OFFICER</b></p>	<p>Calculation of Council Tax Base 2025/26</p>
<p><b>SUMMARY OF OFFICER DECISION AND REASON FOR THAT DECISION</b></p>	<p>This report presents Swale Borough Council's Council Tax Base, for 2025/26 and the Tax Bases for the Parish and Town Councils. The Council will use the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 in setting the Council Tax and determining the level of Council Tax income for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Council Tax Base is a measure of the Council's taxable capacity, for the purpose of setting its Council Tax.</p> <p>The Council Tax Base for 2025/26 must be notified to major precepting authorities by 31 January 2025.</p> <p>The Council Tax Base for 2025/26 is 50,518.20.</p> <p>If Council Tax grants from the County Council are not withdrawn, the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 will be 51,035.27.</p>
<p><b>DATE OF OFFICER DECISION</b></p>	<p>3 December 2024</p>
<p><b>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b></p>	<p>The alternative option would be to use an alternative collection rate to apply to the tax base.</p>
<p><b>DETAILS OF ANY CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN</b></p>	<p>Committee chairs, plus the Deputy Leader of the Council, as Finance Sub Group, have been consulted on these options.</p>
<p><b>DETAILS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS</b></p>	<p>There are no conflicts of interests</p>
<p><b>CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES/FURTHER INFORMATION</b></p>	<p>Claire Stanbury Head of Finance &amp; Procurement clairestanbury@swale.gov.uk</p>

**DELEGATED AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH OFFICER IS ACTING****DELEGATING COMMITTEE OR INDIVIDUAL**

Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources

Regulations made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended)) require each billing authority to calculate its 'Council Tax Base'. The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914) provides amended statutory guidance to incorporate the changes as a result of the introduction of the council tax support scheme from 1 April 2013.

Section 84 of the Local Government Act 2003 amends Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 so that a full council meeting is no longer required to adopt the Council Tax Base that is used when setting Council Taxes.

Under paragraph 14 of the Swale Borough Council Constitution Delegations to the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Financial Officer has the authority to "set the council tax and business rate base".

**TITLE OF REPORT TO COMMITTEE**

Not applicable

**DECISION/RECOMMENDATION MADE BY COMMITTEE**

Not applicable

**DATE OF COMMITTEE DECISION**

Not applicable

A copy of this Notice will be published on the Council's website

## **1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 which must be notified to major precepting authorities by 31 January 2025.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Regulations made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended)) require each billing authority to calculate its 'Council Tax Base'. The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914) provides amended statutory guidance to incorporate the changes as a result of the introduction of the council tax support scheme from 1 April 2013.
- 2.2 The Council Tax Base is a measure of the Council's taxable capacity, for the purpose of setting its Council Tax.
- 2.3 This report presents Swale Borough Council's Council Tax Base, for 2025/26 and the Tax Bases for the Parish and Town Councils. The Council will use the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 in setting the Council Tax and determining the level of Council Tax income for 2025/26.

## **3. Proposal**

- 3.1 The Council Tax Base has been arrived at by making a calculation of the relevant amount for each band i.e.
  - 3.1.1 the number of dwellings within the area of the Council as notified by the Valuation Officer;
  - 3.1.2 reductions anticipated during the year with due allowance for only part of the year;
  - 3.1.3 a prudent view on estimating the number of new properties that will be included on the Council Tax register;
  - 3.1.4 the estimated number of discounts;
  - 3.1.5 the assessment of these discounts at the appropriate percentage;
  - 3.1.6 the number of dwellings which will be exempt;
  - 3.1.7 an allowance where it is anticipated that, due to disability, the person liable to pay the Council Tax is to pay a sum relating to a band lower than that under which the property is listed;
  - 3.1.8 a premium charged on empty properties and second homes.
- 3.2 A further adjustment is required to the Tax Base due to the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) that replaced Council Tax Benefit, and was introduced for the first time in 2013/14. The CTSS is treated as a discount rather than a benefit and therefore reduces the Tax Base.

- 3.3 In determining the Tax Base, I have also reviewed the allowance made for the total collection rate. For 2024/25 the Council had a collection rate of 98.70%.
- 3.4 Due to the proposal that Council Tax grants from Kent County Council will be terminated in 2025/26, it is my opinion that the collection rate should be reduced to 97.70% for 2025/26.
- 3.5 If the termination of the grants does not happen, we will revert to a collection rate of 98.70%.
- 3.6 The result of these calculations is that the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 is 50,518.20 (50,367.85 for 2024/25).
- 3.7 If the grants are maintained, the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 will be 51,035.27.
- 3.8 The details of the calculations for the whole of the Swale Borough Council and for the Parish and Town Councils within the Borough are shown in Appendices I and II.
- 3.9 As a billing authority, Swale Borough Council must issue to precepting authorities by 31 December a schedule of proposed payments in respect of their precepts and its own. This schedule of proposed payments must be confirmed and notified to precepting authorities by 31 January.
- 3.10 The payment of Parish Precepts is to be the same as for the payment of Parish Precepts in 2024/25, i.e. 50% by end of April 2025 and 50% by end of September 2025.

#### **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The alternative option would be to use an alternative collection rate to apply to the tax base.
- 4.2 As set out in points 3.4 to 3.7 above, the Council Tax Base has been calculated on two bases, based on potential funding arrangements, with the provision to use the higher Tax Base if funding levels are maintained.

#### **5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 Committee chairs, plus the Deputy Leader of the Council, as Finance Sub Group, have been consulted on these options.

#### **6. Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	None
Financial, Resource and Property	The Council Tax Base will be used to calculate the income from Council Tax for the Council following the setting of the Council Tax at the Council meeting on 19 February 2025.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Council must calculate the tax base each year in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended)), the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914), and the Local Government Act 2003. Section 84 of the Local Government Act 2003 amends Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 so that a full council meeting is no longer required to adopt the Council Tax Base that is used when setting Council Taxes.
Crime and Disorder	None
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None
Health and Wellbeing	None
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Risk Implications – This Officer Decision means that the Council will meet its statutory duty to approve the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 and notify precepting authorities by 31 January 2025.  Withdrawal of Council Tax grant funding from Kent County Council could adversely impact collection rates beyond the amount allowed for in the calculation. This would have a negative impact on the Council's financial position.
Equality and Diversity	None
Privacy and Data Protection	None

## **7. Appendices**

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- Appendix I: 2025/26 Tax Base Calculation for the Whole Council Area
- Appendix II: 2025/26 Tax Base for Parishes in the Swale Area

## **8. Background Papers**

8.1 The Finance Department and the Revenues and Benefits Section hold detailed information on the makeup of the tax base for each Parish and every unparished area.