

Rishi Sunak  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Rishi

**Council tax harmonisation in new unitary and merged councils**

Thank you for your letter dated 17 October 2018 setting out the approach to council tax harmonisation that the Government is minded to adopt. The Secretary of State's endorsement of local preference as the fundamental determinate of the strategy is extremely welcomed by, and important to, the BCP Shadow Executive.

As a new unitary council we have always been keen to strike the balance between ensuring council tax payers do not experience a large increase in bills and not allowing residents in any one part of the area to be concerned that they are effectively contributing more to the cost of services than others in the area. This is why we determined early in the process a commitment that no Borough's Council Tax level will increase at a rate exceeding the Government's referendum limits and in each year the gap between the highest and lowest prevailing rates will reduce.

As part of the necessary secondary legislation we would find it useful if the regulations could set out how the Adult Social Care precept should be harmonised and shown on the council tax bills.

Yours sincerely

**Chairman BCP Shadow Executive**

Cc - All Local MPs and Paul Rowsell