

3 October 2023

Thérèse Coffey MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Nobel House, 17 Smith Square  
London, SW1P 3JR

Dear Secretary of State,

Wandsworth Council has been notified by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) that they wish to increase the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Special Levy, a local tax that pays towards the upkeep of green spaces in Wandsworth and neighbouring London boroughs.

I understand from the previous correspondence between DEFRA and WPCC (your ref: PO2022/12999/BG) that evidence of support from local authorities is welcomed by your department in your consideration of increases in the WPCC's council tax levy above the inflationary limit, and that you have the power to make a decision in principle.

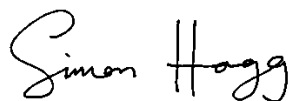
I am writing to confirm that Wandsworth Council does not support WPCC's proposed uprating of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Special Levy by 25%. I understand that this increase would be in addition to the inflationary increase that the WPCC apply at the maximum level every year already, so residents' bills could rise by almost a third under their proposals.

We have offered to work with the WPCC to find efficiencies given the council itself maintains a number of its own open spaces, but this offer has not been taken up.

With high inflation and the cost of living crisis affecting everyone in Wandsworth, it is more important than ever that residents' bills are kept as low as possible. That is why Wandsworth Council froze the main rate of council tax in 2023-24.

I hope you can reassure the Council and residents in Wandsworth that you intend to reject this request which is wholly unacceptable.

Yours sincerely,



Leader of the Council

cc : Councillor Ross Garrod, London Borough of Merton Leader  
: Fleur Anderson, Member of Parliament, Putney

