

Results of Consultation

Q1. Do you think that everyone (apart from pensioners, who are not affected by these changes) should pay a minimum of 20% towards their council tax?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	662	69.2	72.9	72.9
	No	246	25.7	27.1	100.0
	Total	908	94.9	100.0	
Missing	0	49	5.1		
Total		957	100.0		

Q2. Do you think we should protect certain vulnerable groups from any reduction? (E.g. disabled people or families with children under 5)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	678	70.8	76.5	76.5
	No	208	21.7	23.5	100.0
	Total	886	92.6	100.0	
Missing	0	71	7.4		
Total		957	100.0		

Q3 Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Q3 ^a	Q3a. Which of the following vulnerable groups do you think we should protect? - Disabled people	623	34.7%	76.0%
	Q3b. Families with children under five	283	15.7%	34.5%
	Q3c. War widows and widowers	415	23.1%	50.6%
	Q3d. All families on a low income	397	22.1%	48.4%
	Q3e. Don't know	79	4.4%	9.6%
Total		1797	100.0%	219.1%

Q4. In the proposed scheme do you agree the council should encourage people receiving council tax support to find work and stay in work?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	541	56.5	56.9	56.9
	Agree	279	29.2	29.3	86.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	78	8.2	8.2	94.4
	Disagree	27	2.8	2.8	97.3
	Strongly disagree	26	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	951	99.4	100.0	
Missing	0	6	.6		
Total		957	100.0		

Q5. Should working age people receiving council tax support with savings of £6,000 or more be asked to use some of these savings to pay their council tax?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	553	57.8	58.1	58.1
	No	328	34.3	34.5	92.6
	Don't know	70	7.3	7.4	100.0
	Total	951	99.4	100.0	
Missing	0	6	.6		
Total		957	100.0		

Q6. Do you think there should be a single rate of deduction that is lower than the current rate?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	578	60.4	61.0	61.0
	No	198	20.7	20.9	81.9
	Don't know	172	18.0	18.1	100.0
	Total	948	99.1	100.0	
Missing	0	8	.8		
	System	1	.1		
	Total	9	.9		
Total		957	100.0		

Q7. If someone asks us to pay the new council tax support from an earlier date than they made their claim do you think we should?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	257	26.9	27.2	27.2
	No	588	61.4	62.3	89.5
	Don't know	99	10.3	10.5	100.0
	Total	944	98.6	100.0	
Missing	0	10	1.0		
	System	3	.3		
	Total	13	1.4		
Total		957	100.0		

Q8. The council proposes that it is reasonable not to include a second adult rebate element in the new council tax support scheme. Do you support this approach?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	720	75.2	76.7	76.7
	No	131	13.7	14.0	90.6
	Don't know	88	9.2	9.4	100.0
	Total	939	98.1	100.0	
Missing	0	17	1.8		
	System	1	.1		
	Total	18	1.9		
Total		957	100.0		

Q9. The council proposes to not allow awards of underlying entitlement in respect of overpaid benefit periods in the new council tax support scheme. Do you agree this is reasonable?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	636	66.5	68.5	68.5
	No	153	16.0	16.5	84.9
	Don't know	140	14.6	15.1	100.0
	Total	929	97.1	100.0	
Missing	0	24	2.5		
	4	1	.1		
	System	3	.3		
	Total	28	2.9		
Total		957	100.0		

Q10. The council would like to set up a discretionary fund to help protect the most vulnerable people from the impact of any changes (subject to meeting criteria). Do you support this approach?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	721	75.3	82.8	82.8
	No	93	9.7	10.7	93.5
	Don't know	57	6.0	6.5	100.0
	Total	871	91.0	100.0	
Missing	0	17	1.8		
	4	28	2.9		
	5	39	4.1		
	6	2	.2		
	Total	86	9.0		
Total		957	100.0		

In addition to the results of the Consultation we attach documents from various bodies whose comments have been considered during the design of the scheme. They include Wiltshire Constabulary, the RNIB and the Royal British Legion. In addition we have received a number of comments from the public some of which are attached, including the response from our own Housing Department which is shown below.

Question 1:

Do you think that everyone (apart from pensioners, who are not affected by these changes) should pay a minimum of 20% towards their council tax?

This would mean each household that currently gets council tax benefit would see it reduced by an average of £237 per year.

- Yes
- No

Housing response: No.

Rationale: Vulnerable and very low income groups should be exempted. With the forthcoming housing benefit changes, the latter in particular will be facing difficulties paying their rent. Adding changes for council tax would exacerbate this.

Question 2:

Do you think we should protect certain vulnerable groups from any reduction? (E.g. disabled people or families with children under 5)

- Yes
- No

Housing response: Yes

Rationale: as above

Question 3:

Which of the following vulnerable groups do you think we should protect? You can tick as many boxes as you like

- Disabled people
- Families with children under five
- War widows and widowers
- All families on a low income
- Don't know

Housing response: All families on a low income

Rationale: Households on a low income are already facing HB cuts and should be protected from CTB cuts.

War widows and widowers do not appear to be significantly at risk as a result of other benefit changes and so should not be protected here. Families with children under 5 and disabled person households can be protected if they are on a low income via the 'families on a low income' option. Higher income families with young children / disabled families do not require protection.

Question 4:

In the proposed scheme do you agree the council should encourage people receiving council tax support to find work and stay in work? This would allow those people that are on a low income to pay less council tax.

- Strongly agree

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Housing response: Agree

Rationale: This would allow people to earn more income before it affects their benefit, thus upholding the government agenda by incentivising low-paid work

Question 5:

Should working age people receiving council tax support with savings of £6,000 or more be asked to use some of these savings to pay their council tax?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: Yes

Rationale: The existing limit on savings is £16,000. This seems quite high.

Question 6:

We want to provide a simpler scheme and encourage people to work therefore the council proposes to introduce a flat rate deduction which is lower than the current rate.

Do you think there should be a single rate of deduction that is lower than the current rate?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: Don't know

Rationale: it depends what the flat rate is and how it is calculated.

Question 7:

If someone asks us to pay the new council tax support from an earlier date than they made their claim do you think we should?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: Yes, for vulnerable groups only

Rationale: yes for vulnerable groups, as these may have a good reason for not supplying info in a timely manner e.g. admitted to hospital.

Question 8:

The council proposes that it is reasonable not to include a second adult rebate element in the new council tax support scheme. Do you support this approach?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: Yes

Question 9:

The council proposes to not allow awards of underlying entitlement in respect of overpaid benefit periods in the new council tax support scheme. Do you agree this is reasonable?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: No

Rationale: there is an issue of fairness at stake.

Question 10:

The council would like to set up a discretionary fund to help protect the most vulnerable people from the impact of any changes (subject to meeting criteria). Do you support this approach?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Housing response: Yes

Rationale: could be useful for households in difficulty.