



Council Tax Benefit Consultation

Council Tax Benefit is changing and we want your views

Council Tax Benefit (CTB) currently helps people on a low income pay their Council Tax. From April 2013 CTB will be abolished. It will be replaced by a new Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS). The Government have said that local Councils will be responsible for designing and implementing their own schemes to provide help to people on a low income pay their Council Tax.

Pensioners will not be affected by these changes. People who have reached the age for State Pension Credit will have their support assessed under a national scheme.

Under the current CTB scheme, the Council receives funding from the Government to cover the cost of the scheme. This will not be the case for LCTSS, as the Government will give the Council a fixed grant. This will be at least 10% less than what we currently pay out in CTB and means we will have less money to run our LCTSS.

We have to make some very difficult decisions. Because pensioners are protected, the level of support we will be able to give to our working-age customers under a LCTSS may have to be less than we currently give them under CTB.

We are proposing the following scheme:

Regardless of their financial circumstances, every working-age claimant should pay the first 20% of their Council Tax liability. This means people who currently get full CTB will have to pay something towards their Council Tax from 1st April 2013.

People living in properties whose Council Tax band is E, F, G or H will have their Local Council Tax Support restricted to the maximum amount payable for a band D property.

Under the existing scheme, Second Adult Rebate can be granted to single people who have a high income if they share their home with someone on a low income (not their partner). We are proposing to stop this.

In the proposed scheme all existing CTB claims will automatically be reassessed under the new LCTSS from 1st April 2013.

1. Do you think that everyone of working age should pay something towards their Council Tax?

232 Yes

201 No

2. Pensioners are not affected by these changes.

What do you think that everyone else should pay as a minimum, towards their Council Tax?

277 10%

70 20%

17 30%

9 more than 30%

3. Should people who receive Council Tax Benefit, who are living in more expensive properties, receive less Council Tax Support?

222 Yes

206 No

4. Should people who receive help to pay their Council Tax Benefit be given extra help, for a limited period (such as 3 months), when they start work?

360 Yes

76 No

At the moment, some people can get help to pay for Council Tax. The amount they receive depends on how much money they have coming in. If they have more money coming in than the minimum the law says they need to live on, it means for every extra £1 they have in income, they pay 20p per week towards their Council Tax.

This could change so that people pay more than 20p for every extra £1 they have in income.

5. Is this fair?

144 Yes

288 No

6. If you answered yes, how much more for every extra £1 in income, do you think people should be asked to pay towards their Council Tax?

99 25p

32 30p

12 35p

Council Tax Benefit is assessed on the needs of the person making the claim, their partner and their dependent children. Any other adults within the household are expected to contribute towards the Council Tax, depending on their income. This could change so that these additional adults are expected to contribute more.

7. Is this fair?

260 Yes

173 No

At the moment, if you can afford to pay your Council Tax but live with someone on a low income, who is not your partner, you may be able to get help with your Council Tax. This is called second adult rebate. The Council is proposing to stop this rebate.

8. Do you agree that the rebate should be stopped?

230 Yes

209 No

Currently people with savings of more than £16,000 don't qualify for Council Tax Benefit.

9. Should people with savings of less than £16,000 be expected to use these savings to pay their Council Tax?

144 Yes

297 No

If yes, what is the maximum amount of savings you should be able to hold and still qualify for Council Tax Support?

10. You shouldn't have to pay if your savings are less than:

28 £12,000

47 £8,000

43 £4,000

26 £0

11. Should the Council protect the most vulnerable people from paying more Council Tax?

395 Yes

41 No

12. If you answered yes, which vulnerable groups of people do you think should be protected under the scheme? e.g. those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.

373

13. Have you got any comments that you wish to make about these changes?

193

The following information is being collected to find out whether there are any needs which we are not meeting. You do not have to complete the questions if you do not want to but we would be pleased to receive responses to any of the questions.

Do you currently receive Council Tax Benefit?

306 Yes

91 No

Date of birth:

348

Postcode:

344

Gender:

133 Male

265 Female

Partnership Status:

248 Single

115 Married

18 Civil Partnership

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out day to day activities?

115 Yes

262 No

Please state the nature of your disability:

121

Religion of Belief:

2 Buddhist

0 Jewish

124 No religion

197 Christian

0 Muslim

0 Hindu

0 Sikh

Other (please state)

37

Sexual Orientation:

11 Bisexual

287 Heterosexual

3 Gay

1 Lesbian

Ethnic Group:

White

376 British

3 Eastern European

2 Irish

Any other White background (please state):

13

Dual Heritage (tick all that apply)

Black Caribbean

Asian

29 White

Black African

Chinese

Any other Mixed background (please state):

0

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

0 Bangladeshi

Any other Asian background (please state):

1

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black background (please state):

0

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese

South East Asian

Any other (please state)

0

Please provide any other information about yourself that you may want to tell us (e.g. carer, single parent):

145

Thank you for taking the time to complete this Equalities Monitoring Form. Any information provided here will be kept confidential and will only be used for statistical monitoring and to help us improve services, for everyone. The specific information gathered from this form will not be passed on to any other organisation.