



Local Council Tax Support Scheme Questionnaire

Ryedale District Council is currently consulting on its Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the 2016/17 financial year.

Council Tax Support (CTS) was implemented on 1 April 2013 and replaced the former national Council Tax Benefit scheme with a discount scheme. It is a discretionary means-tested reduction to help residents on low incomes to pay their Council Tax bill.

The current scheme provides that all working age customers have a maximum award of 91.5% of their Council Tax liability, which means that every working age household is required to pay at least 8.5% of their Council Tax bill.

Proposed changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/17

Local Authorities must review their schemes annually and the Council is considering its options for the maximum Council Tax liability we use for 2016/17.

The scheme for Pension Age applicants is set by Government and is not affected by any of the changes set out in this consultation.

The Government has also announced its intention to remove the family premium and limit the backdating of Housing Benefit claims to four weeks instead of six months. The Council proposes to do the same for its Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/17.

Have your say

We welcome your views on the proposals outlined by completing the following short questionnaire.

It is important to get the views of all Council Taxpayers, regardless of whether you receive any discounts or reductions, as the scheme is paid for through Council Tax payments.

The consultation is open from Wednesday 7 October to Wednesday 11 November 2015

Some sections are optional, but please continue to the end of the questionnaire in order to complete and submit.

Q1 **MAXIMUM AWARD**

Currently all working age customers can apply for a maximum reduction of 91.5% of their Council Tax Bill. For 2016/17, we are considering keeping the reduction against the bill at 91.5% or changing the reduction against the bill to 85% or 80%:

The effect of the different options we are considering is illustrated in the table below. The example below is based on the Band D charge of £1554.06 (without any Parish Charges) across the Ryedale District for the 2015/16 year.

	Under the current scheme 91.5% charges would be:	Under the proposed scheme 85% charges would be:	Under the proposed scheme 80% charges would be:
Annual Cost	£132.10	£233.11	£310.81
Monthly Cost over 10 months	£13.21	£23.31	£31.08
Weekly Cost	£2.53	£4.46	£5.94

I believe that all eligible working age customers should have the maximum award of Council Tax Support restricted to:

- 91.5% (current)
- 85%
- 80%
- Don't know

If you have any comments or alternative suggestions to this proposal please detail below:

Q2 BACKDATING COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

From 1st April 2016 Housing Benefit will be backdated for a maximum of four weeks from the present maximum of six months. It is proposed that the Council Tax Support Scheme be aligned with the changes for Housing Benefit (maximum four weeks) from 1st April 2016. Do you agree?

- I agree with limiting the backdating of Council Tax Support to a maximum of four weeks
- I disagree with limiting the backdating of Council Tax Support to a maximum of four weeks
- I have no opinion

If you have any further comments or alternative suggestions, please detail below:

Q3 REMOVAL OF FAMILY PREMIUM

From 1 April 2016 the Government has announced that the Family Premium element will be removed for new Housing Benefit claims made after 1st April 2016. This premium will also be removed from tax credits and universal credit from April 2017.

It is proposed that the Council Tax Support Scheme be aligned with this. Please note this change would not affect those claimants on Income Support, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, or Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance.

Do you agree?

- I agree with removing the Family Premium from the Council Tax Support Scheme
- I disagree with removing the Family Premium from the Council Tax Support Scheme
- I have no opinion

If you have any further comments or alternative suggestions, please detail below:

Equalities Monitoring Form (optional)

Section A

To help us understand what different people think about the proposed local council tax support scheme for Ryedale, please provide us with the following information. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please go to Section B.

Are you a Council Tax payer in the Ryedale area?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

If you ticked 'Yes', which of the following towns do you live in or closest to?

- Helmsley
 Kirkbymoorside
 Malton
 Norton
 Pickering
 Prefer not to answer

Are you receiving Council Tax Support?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

Are you...?

- Female
 Male
 Prefer not to answer

Date of birth: (DD/MM/YYYY)

Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability?

- Yes No Prefer not to answer

Section B - Organisation details

Q10 Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- Individual
 On behalf of an Organisation

Are you responding to this consultation in your capacity as a representative of any of the following?

	Yes	No
Voluntary Organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing Association	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landlord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other, please specify:		

Please complete your contact details below (optional):

Name

Address

E-mail address

Telephone number

Next steps

We will consider the views of everyone who responds to this questionnaire.

The Council's Policy & Resources Committee will meet on 26 November 2015 to review the consultation results and make final recommendations.

The new scheme will be approved by full Council in December 2015 for implementation from 1st April 2016.

Following the final decision by Council in December 2015, we will let people know about the new scheme.

Further information

If you would like to contact someone about the possible changes you can telephone 01653 600666 or email benefits@ryedale.gov.uk

Thank you for your time.

Please select 'Submit' below to complete.