

Appendix A - Public consultation regarding potential amends to the scheme from April 2022

The consultation ran from 12 August 2021 to 12 September 2021. Overall 86 responses were received.

Methodology

- Online consultation survey devised with attention to Plain English standards, and launched on consultation section of RDC website
- Consultation published via media release, social media, advert in On Your Doorstep (delivered to 26,000 Ryedale households), information and poster provided to Community Connect partners and town/parish council clerks, boosted social media posts

Results summary

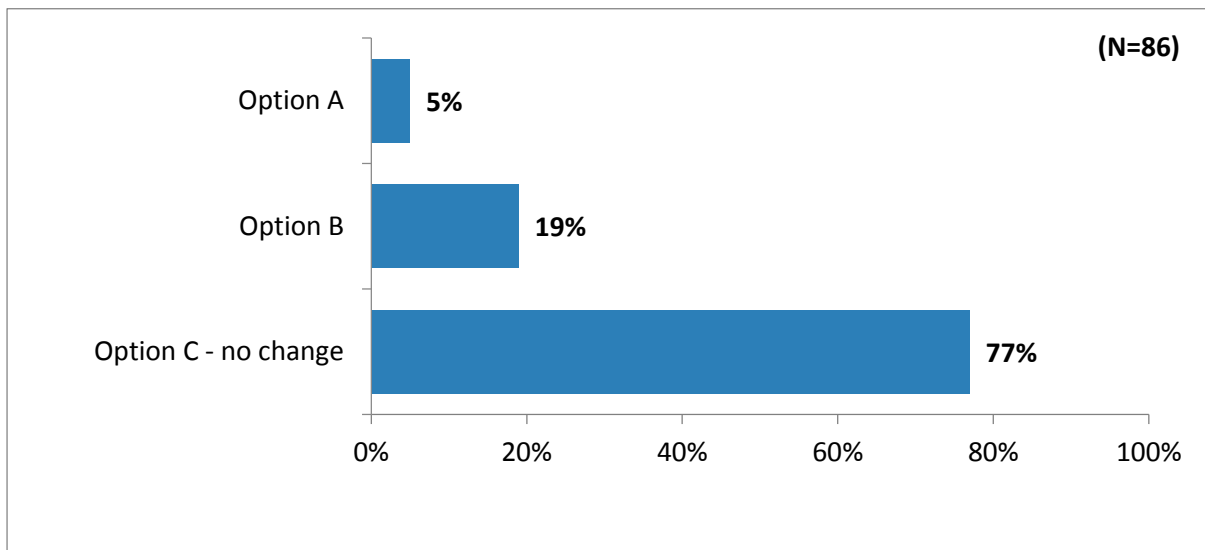
- 77% of respondents were in favour of leaving the scheme as it stands with no change
- 48% were in favour of keeping the backdate period as it stands with no change, however it should be noted that this was the majority view by a narrow margin of 3%

Other points to note

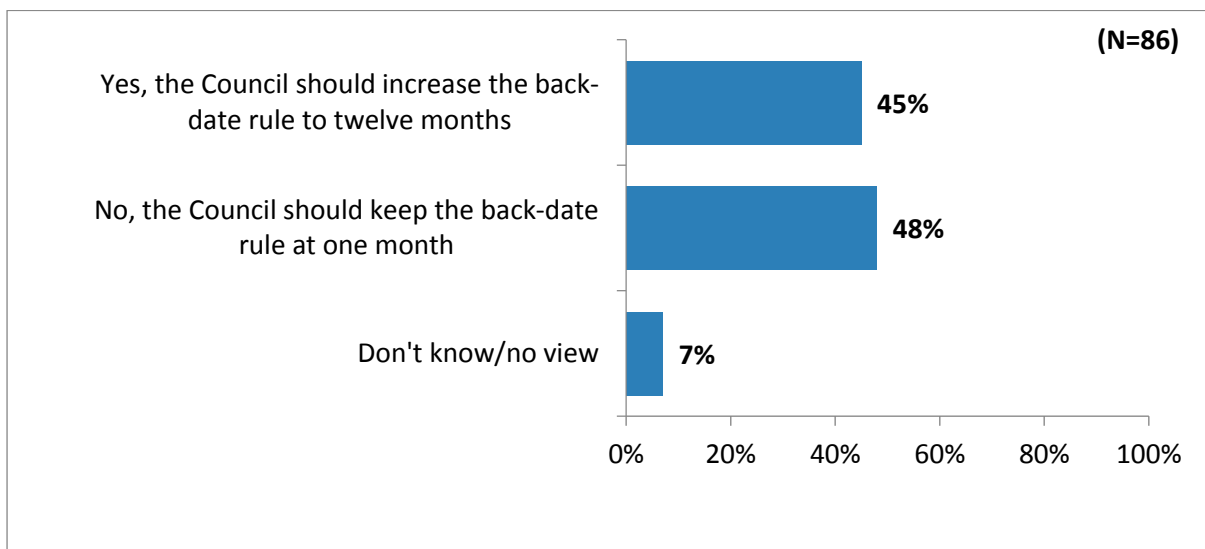
- There were a large number of free text comments. Although not all directly related to the consultation in hand, these may provide useful data on public views of Council Tax and the Benefit Scheme
- Two professional organisations provided consultation responses
 - Veritau – highlighted concerns about change from a fraud perspective and all about pass-porting of CTS claims from DWP
 - Welfare Benefits Unit – supported change, were in favour of additional support for disabled people, and gave views about the equalities aspect of Universal Credit housing costs that could be analysed further

Consultation Results

View on options: (A = new category for 3+ children; B = new categories for 3 and 4+ children; C = no change)

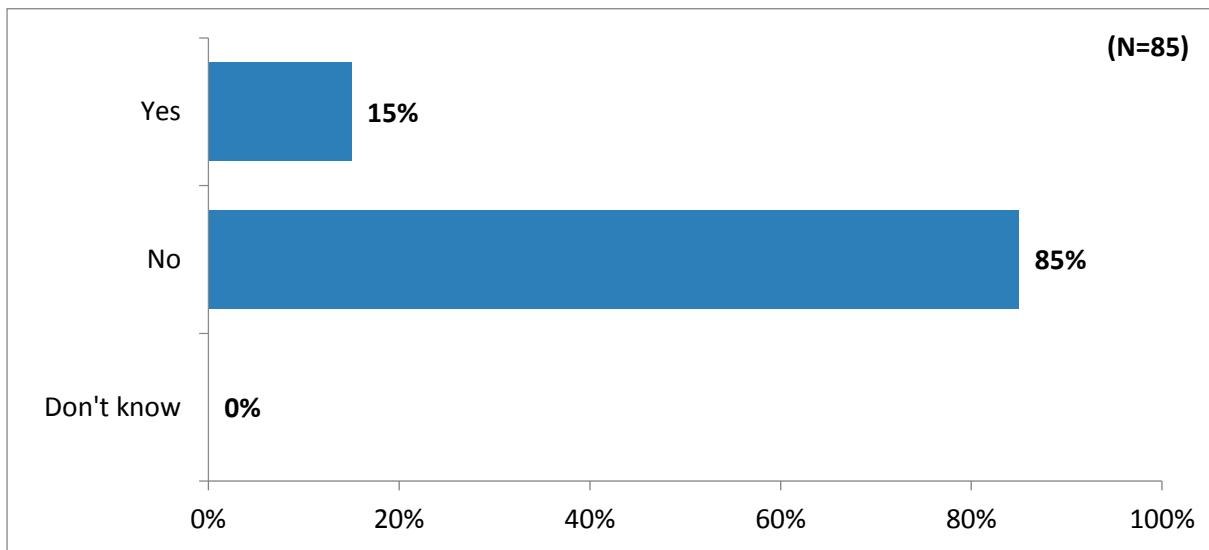


We are considering whether to increase the back-date rule from one month to twelve months. Do you support this?

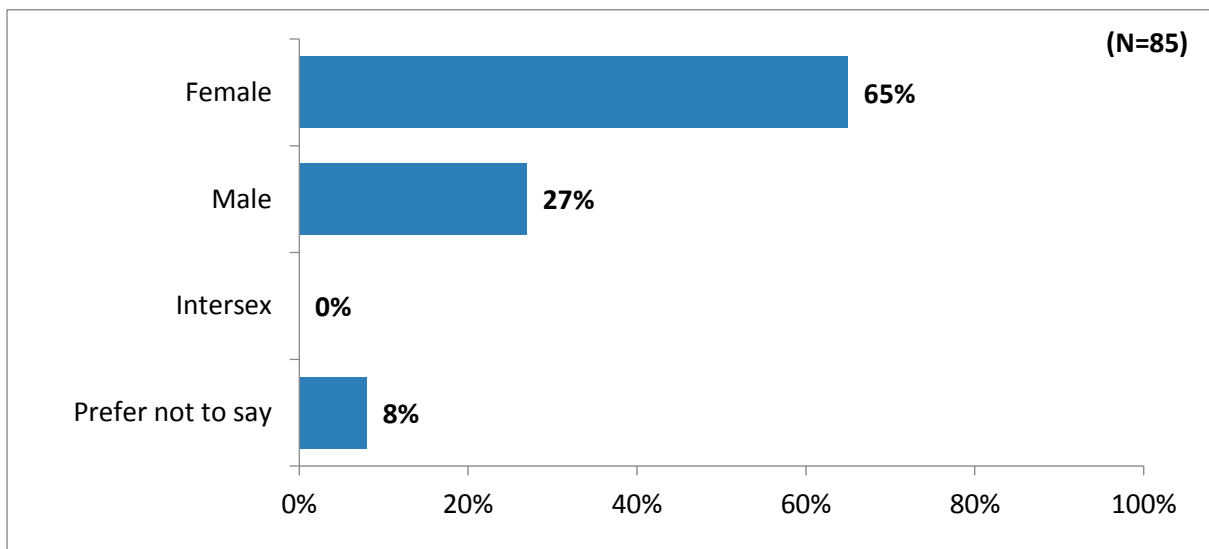


Demographic Questions

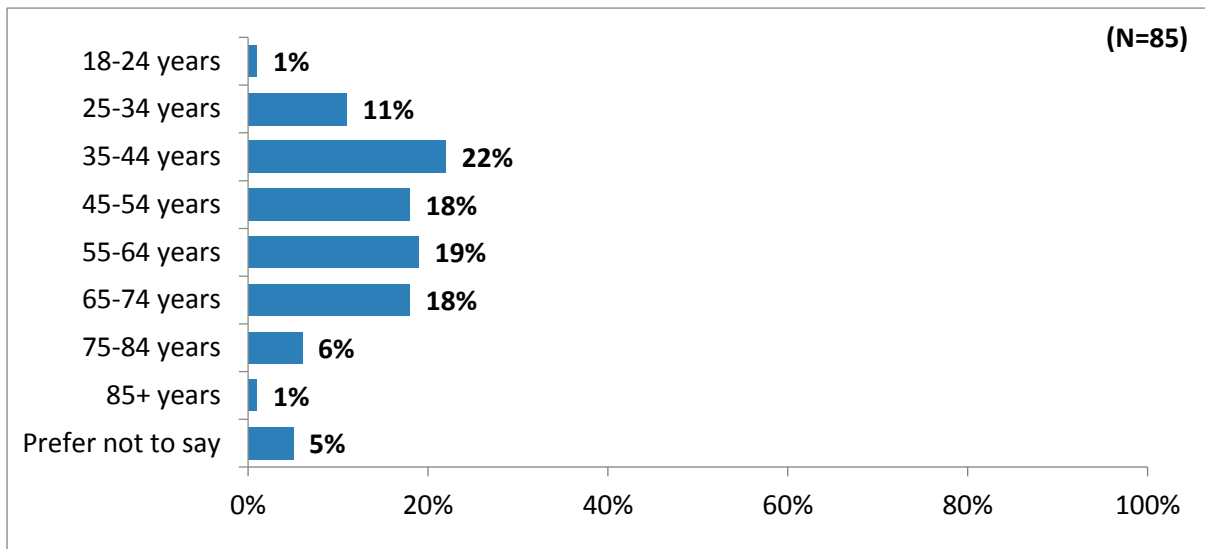
Do you, or someone in your household, receive Council Tax Support (a reduction in your Council Tax bill)?



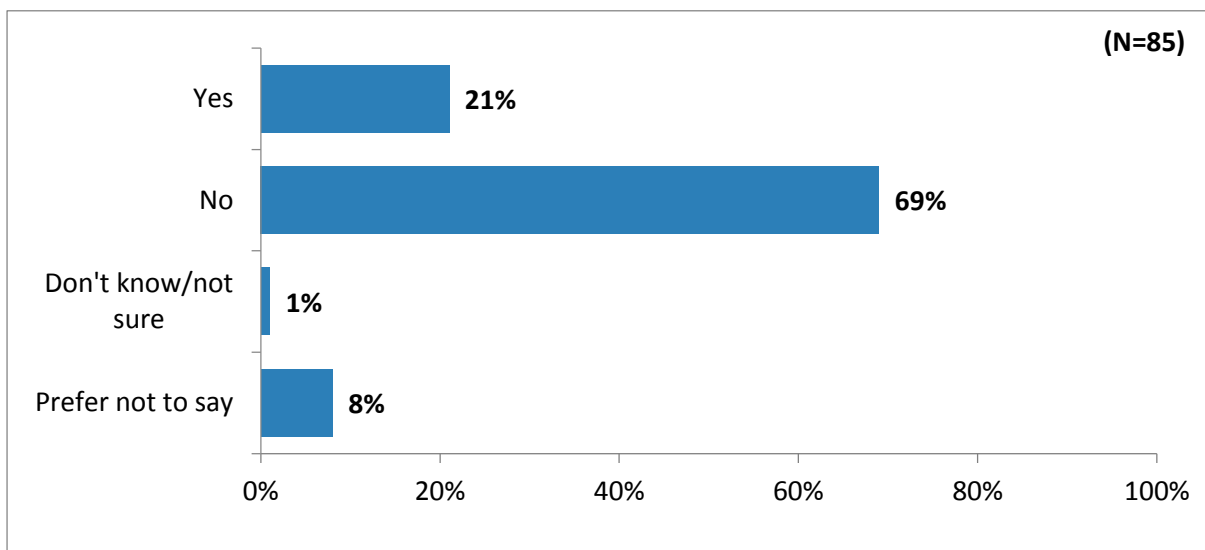
What is your sex?



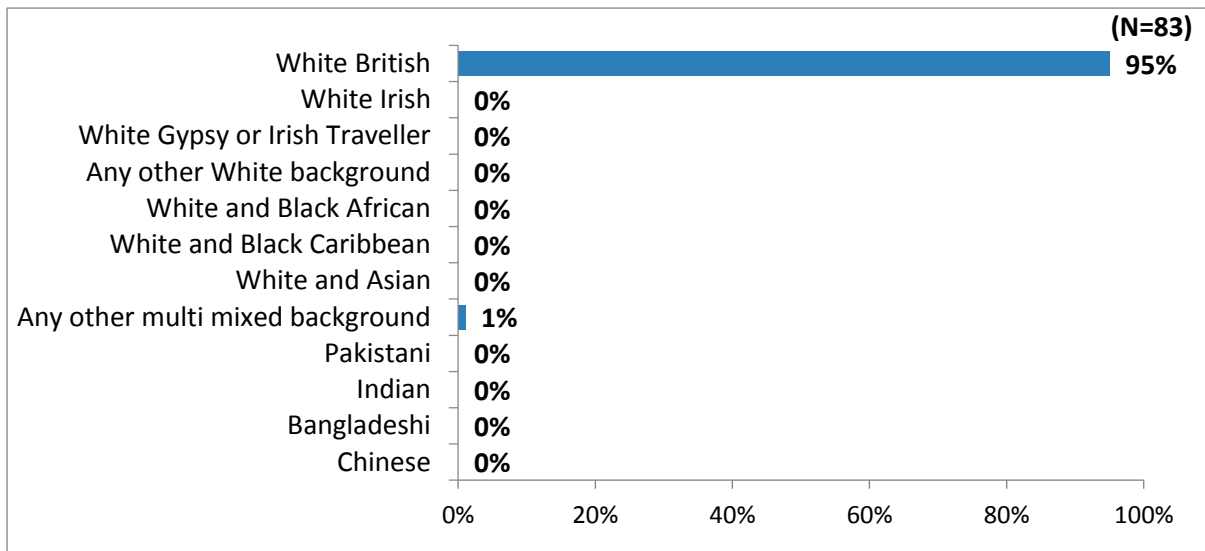
How old are you?



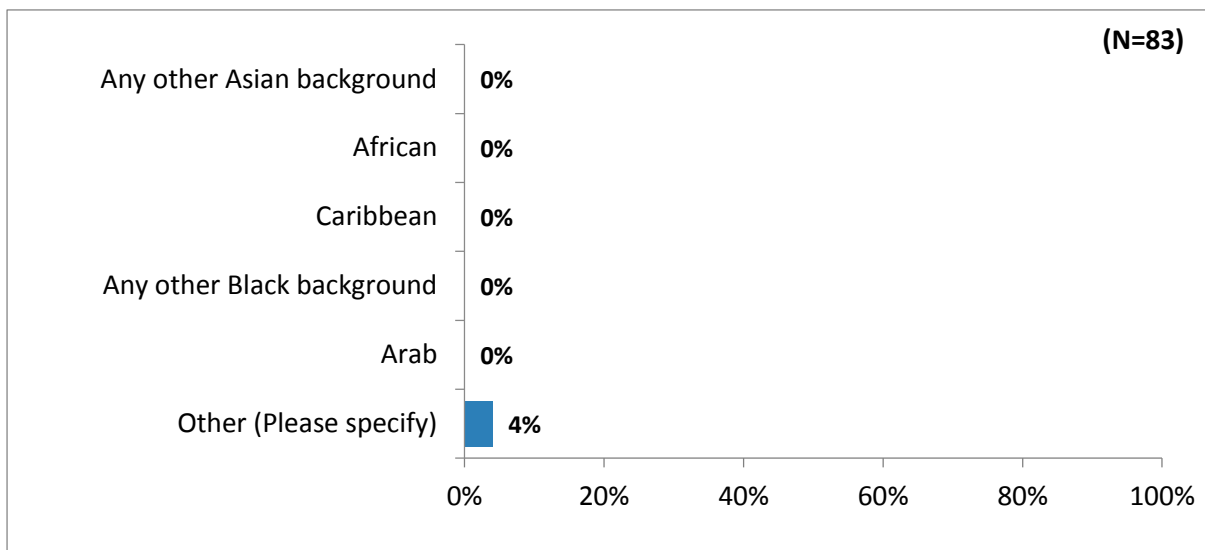
Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?



What is your ethnicity?



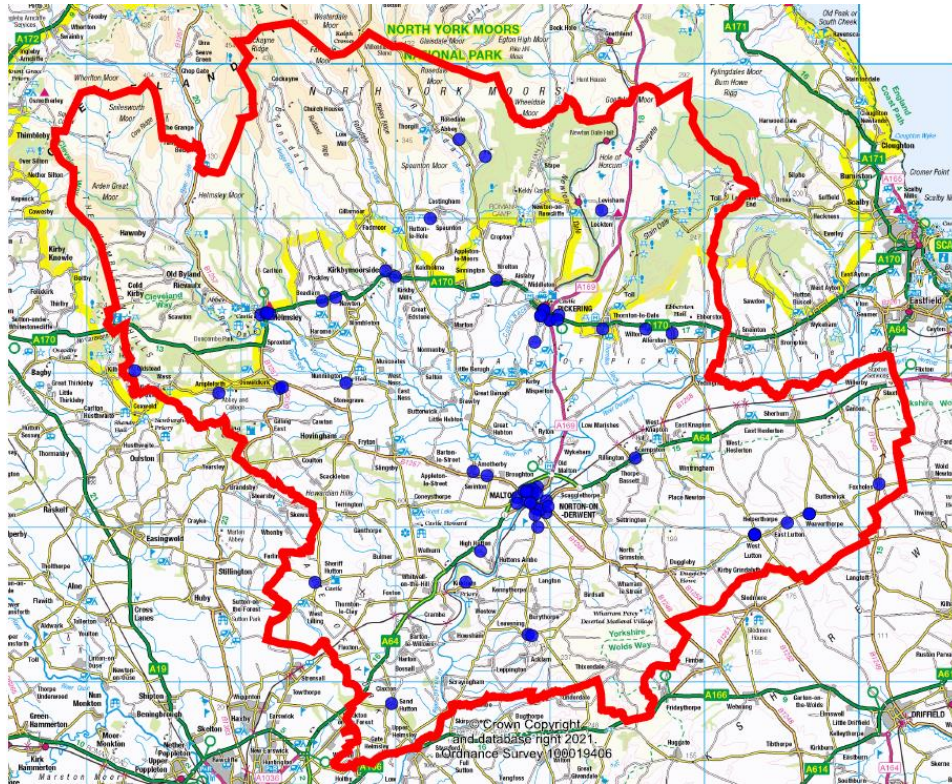
What is your ethnicity? (Continued)



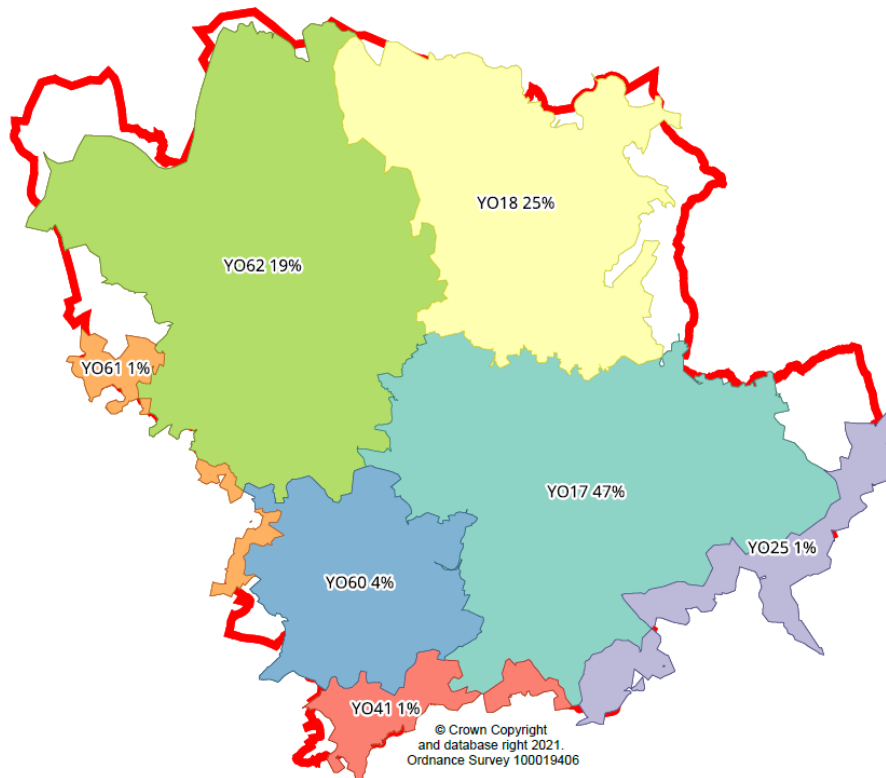
Postcodes

*Only full postcodes could be mapped, incomplete postcodes could not be used. (N=69)

Individual Responses Plotted



Percentage Of Responses By Area



Free Text Comments

*all comments are verbatim from the consultation responses

Comments
The current scheme is easy to understand and is aligned to other welfare benefits, adding additional bands would complicate the scheme.. Increasing the current backdate rule from 1 month to a maximum of 12 months is a good idea.
I have 2 disabled people that live with me one being my husband an the other my son I also have 3 other children and find it really hard to meet ends meat as it is without having to pay full council tax
The council tax should include disabled and carers as well, Especially if you've children and disabled people within the house, the main bread winner would be the career so how can they pay council tax by living on universal credit? These need to be considered.
The newest council tax support scheme has left us paying more council tax than before, yet the overall household income has reduced significantly, even taking into consideration universal credit. We only have 2 children so the additional child aspect would not benefit us but I also do not see why more children should mean cheaper council tax considering they receive more benefits than those with 2 children. Overall, I would like to see the scheme return to its previous support which showed a fairer support for all as opposed to those with more children
Do not give any discounts for children, give a discount If no children in the household as less services used
Self employed people on low incomes, who receive tax credits, should be eligible for support, not only those on universal credit. I am really struggling to make ends meet, a lone parent with 3 kids, my business has practically collapsed over covid, and has never been very profitable....yet I pay almost the same council tax as my millionaire neighbour and am not eligible for support as I still get tax credits. Council tax is crippling me financially. I used to receive support...then it was scrapped overnight for the self employed....seems very harsh and unfair.
There should be more flexibility for people who are receiving LCWRA element of Universal Credit. Disabled and long term sick people find it harder to work and to find work. The current scheme penalising them unfairly and causes unnecessary hardship
We could only afford to have two children so I don't feel like large families should receive more benefits than those that have considered how they will pay for those children.
Maybe something like change the back date rule to 3 months
I'm a full time working 40 year old. I have a full time working partner. I have MS and only work 4 days out of a 5 day week due to ill health. Myself and my partner have no children. We scrape by on the salaries we earn... Yet we cree to pay £200 a month council tax! Yes, £200 a month. I choose not to have kids because I can't afford to! Why oh why should we continue to pay full tax just because we work full time! I'm so sick of having to pay full whack and literally being crippled every month because the tax is so high. Not to mention God forbid there was an emergency because it would take police, fire and ambulance an extended time to get out here! We also have no footpath outside our house and no street lights. The bins do get emptied but they could be more frequent for the about of money we pay! It's infuriating when others get concessions, others that are already getting benefits that add up to more than I earn! We've also enquired about the banding we're on as this ia 2 bedroom house, but we've been told because there's a dining room downstairs it's classed as a 3bed,hence the extortionate council tax bill each year. It's just rediculous!

Having large families is a choice, and responsibility for their provisions is entirely the parents. I don't see why the majority of us, who act with consideration for our finances, etc., should be burdened by the irresponsible few.

With the impending move to a new authority, before changing the scheme and giving these families more support, I think you should take into account what will happen when the new authority is in place.

Non of this benefits the majority. Rather the majority have to support those that are better off not working and therefore no incentive to get a job. If you can't afford the children you want DONT HAVE THEM.

This will ultimately result in council tax payers having to pay more if they aren't in receipt of benefits.

If the scheme is altered who's going to make up the difference. ???? People with families are already subsidise, single parents job seekers not all genuine as many get more on social benefits one way or another and too idle to go back to work and there are many of those ... Do who pays the IDIOT LIKE ME WHO HAS NO DEPENDANTS WORKS FOR THE COMMUNITY 50 TO 70 HOURS A WEEK TO KEEP A ROOF OVER MY HEAD AND MY BILLS PAID. REALLY TIME COUNCIL CAME BAVK TO THE REAL WORLD ..

My income a week is 114.10 p contributions esa I still have to pay full council tax 25 percent discount I'm disabled and live alone so I give you 96 pound a month for twelve months back ? I live with no heating and no TV ..you almost take quatre of my income each month ...I then have no basic necessities ?no carers no nothing ...I'm paying for others to have a good life and carers ????

Help people who are poorly

Everyone should pay the same - don't penalise those without children

I believe this should stay as it is. Council tax has risen and risen and no support is ever available for working couples with only two people in the household that pay a lot more than others who get more benefits. No help, leniency or rewards/change is ever considered for people who work hard and pay their bills. Just because people have jobs and pay their bills doesn't mean they don't deserve a break from the ever rising cost of living!

I don't think the disabled discount by a band is enough

Why should people with 1 or no children be discriminated against??? Some people can't have children so your saying they have to pay full and people with more children (own choice) get a discount?! If they can't afford the children they shouldn't have them. I find this absolutely disgusting that this is even being considered. Our family would be 1 of these families that wouldn't get a discount as we don't have enough children and this is NOT our choice but life!

I cannot answer question 2 as I do not know the likely. Cost to Ryedale Council.

The Council's scheme should align to the governments benefits rules.

I will not benefit, but the changes could help hard pressed families at very little cost to me and other council taxpayers.

Its a balancing act to make Council Tax more affordable for people on lower incomes with larger families together with making the administration of the system easy. How does this fit with the local government reorganisation? Does any of the district councils also offer this type of scheme? Could it be reverted in 2023 with families having got used to the discount then finding that this changes to bring into line with the rest of the districts and NYCC's views.

Why should we pay for people who have more children. They are being irresponsible . I am a single pensioner paying £103 per month to have one very small bag of rubbish collected once a fortnight and a small amount of recycling. I have no children in education, the streets in Norton/Malton are filthy so please explain to me why my council tax is so high when other feckless people pay nothing.

From a senior citizens point of you I think the council tax should be left as it is.

Having children is a personel choise, why should people with no children have to supserdise them.

With due respects, I disagree with helping families any more, I see it as encouraging people to turn down lower paid work, which may take them over the threshold. We are both pensioners and have 6 children and 8 grand children between us , when we were bringing our children up we got very little help. I feel there is plenty of help being handed out

From a counter fraud perspective, having tiered support depending on the number of children could encourage people to provide false information or fail to update changes in circumstances. It can be hard for the council to verify the number of children living in a property. Similarly with the backdate. Allowing a 12 month backdate could open the council to fraud by people falsely claiming the backdate. Better to put additional resource into informing residents of the CTS scheme as they fall into arrears versus allowing arrears to build up and then applying retrospective reductions. A major issue with the CTS scheme from my perspective is the passporting of CTS claims from DWP benefits (e.g. UC). Passporting is no doubt an efficient way to manage the scheme, however there should be a clauses that allow the council to make changes to CTS claims if the council has evidence that the member of the public shouldn't be receiving the DWP benefit (e.g. excess capital or income). The current passporting provisions assume that the DWP is functional organisation that will process information passed to it by councils or residents in an efficient way. Tying the Council's hands to DWP decisions results in the loss of council funds. This is not a radical concept, councils had the right to remove Housing Benefit regardless of DWP passporting. **(This view was supplied by the fraud lead at Veritau who chose to be named)**

Welfare Benefits Unit are concerned about the impact of Council Tax Reduction banding schemes on families with more than two children. Altering the Scheme will support families in poverty and have positive social and health outcomes. We strongly support this change. WBU would like to see a similar change for disabled people as currently extra elements on Universal Credit to meet associated costs reduce the amount that disabled people receive. WBU are very concerned that Universal Credit housing costs are taken into account when assessing entitlement (if other income). UC is calculated using 'living costs' elements (taking into account the claimant's household) and housing costs. Someone on legacy benefits, or UC who owns their own property, receives far greater entitlement than someone in rented accommodation because Ryedale DC take UC housing costs into account. This is clearly irrational and unfair, against basic principles in public law requirements, as claimants in the same position are treated differently. Taking UC housing costs into account puts tenants on UC at risk of severe hardship and eviction. The Scheme allows UC housing costs to be disregarded (criteria states 'may') - in always taking them into account the Council are fettering discretion. Taking UC housing costs into account is also discriminatory as many claimants with protected characteristics are more likely to be in rented accommodation (ie. disabled people, women and ethnic minority groups). WBU suggests that the UC housing costs can be disregarded without a change to the Scheme criteria, and therefore could be implemented immediatly without consultation thereby greatly improving the lives of vulnerable Ryedale residents. **(View of a professional organisation providing benefits advice to those who work with members of the public - chose to be named)**

There should be at least some council tax support for families with low income.

I don't agree with the argument that people are more likely to pay their council tax if it is lower. Firstly, if they have worked out they can get away with not paying, they won't do so now. Secondly, the council should better enforce collecting council tax rather than reward people who don't pay with lower bills. It's for services for everyone, which should be paid for by everyone who stands to benefit.

Adults should decide if they can afford having two or more children, before they go down that route and shouldn't depend or expect reductions in taxes etc to support them. By reducing Council tax further for those having more than 3 children it takes away funding from other in Ryedale who have no control of their circumstances, i.e. the disabled or even those on very low income with one child!!

I don't understand why there is a need for people who have 3 or more children should get additional support when I presume people in the scheme already get a reduced rate. We have two children and have chosen to keep it this way as that is what we can afford. We don't get any reduction in our council tax, which I find ridiculously expensive as it is. Families should not get more help just because they have more children, they should budget for such.

The Councils are always saying they do not have enough funds. Everybody is having to pull together to get through these difficult times. Perhaps people need to think seriously if they can afford large families

If people can't afford more children may I respectfully suggest that they stop having them.

Why should everyone else have to pay for people who chose to have loads of kids. If they can't support them then don't have them. SIMPLE!! To many lazy people who get everything handed to them on a plate whilst normal working people get penalised for them.

If people choose to have 3 or more children they should be able to support themselves financially. This would just encourage people to have more children to increase their benefits. There are better things the council could be spending this money on.