

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

### **Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation Results**

**The Council is facing some tough choices over who will receive help towards their council tax in the future and before a final decision is taken we want your views.**

**To what extent do you agree the proposed guidelines are a reasonable basis for deciding on the changes?**

Of the 51% who disagreed with the proposed guidelines most commented this is targeting the poorest and most vulnerable, varied individual circumstances need to be taken into consideration and those that can't afford to pay won't pay which could result in higher collection rates. Some suggested spread cost over all council tax payers who already pay and add an increase to higher end of council tax bands. A small number suggested the Council pay councillors less and reduce staff salaries and pensions to raise revenue or utilise the Council's cash reserves to cover the deficit.

Of the 31% who agreed with the proposed guidelines thought it was a sensible, fair and reasonable approach and most commented that everyone should contribute to services no matter what their circumstances perhaps including working age children within a household. The amount of proposed contribution ranged from 5% to 25% suggesting the current proposals didn't go far enough.

**To what extent do you consider the changes to be fair for all working age claimants?**

Of the 54% who didn't think the changes were fair and that a "one case fits all" situation could result in hardship it would be particularly unfair for single parents working or unemployed, single persons perhaps subsidising couples and families, working families on low incomes, part-time workers, people starting up their own business, the disabled, those suffering ill health, suffering from mental illness, carers and ex-service men and women.

Of the 42% who considered the changes fair most thought everybody of working age should pay their fair share, for those in employment this would seem reasonable and it was important to keep the changes simple.

**Claimants of pensionable age are protected. Are there any other claimants who should be able to pay no council tax or less than 10% of the tax bill? (Even if this means that for other claimants the minimum payment towards their council tax would have to be more than 10%).**

A majority of 65% agreed that disabled, severely ill, single parents and carers who are already saving the government money and those on low income should pay no council tax as well as those already in receipt of benefits who are on a very strict budget and might have to decide on eating, heating their home or paying council tax.

**If there were no changes in respect of working age claimants, every household would have to pay an average of an extra 50p per month in council tax.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that you prefer this approach?**

A majority of 54% agreed every household should pay an extra 50p and only 20% disagreed with this approach but several commented that this needs to be thought through again to find the money from elsewhere.

### **Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation Analysis**

**The Council is facing some tough choices over who will receive help towards their council tax in the future and before a final decision is taken we want your views.**

Total responses received (82 online/12 paper) 94%

**To what extent do you agree the proposed guidelines are a reasonable basis for deciding on the changes?**

Strongly agree 10 11%

Tend to agree	19	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	14	15%
Tend to disagree	13	14%
Strongly disagree	35	35%
Don't Know	3	3%

**To what extent do you consider the changes to be fair for all working age claimants?**

A great deal	11	12%
A fair amount	28	31%
Not very much	15	15%
Not at all	36	37%
Don't Know	3	3%

**Claimants of pensionable age are protected. Are there any other claimants who should be able to pay no council tax or less than 10% of the tax bill? (Even if this means that for other claimants the minimum payment towards their council tax would have to be more than 10%).**

Yes	61	64%
No	19	21%
Don't Know	14	15%

**If there were no changes in respect of working age claimants, every household would have to pay an average of an extra 50p per month in council tax.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that you prefer this approach?**

Strongly agree	28	30%
Tend to agree	23	25%

Neither agree nor disagree	18	20%
Tend to disagree	4	4%
Strongly disagree	15	15%
Don't Know	5	4%