

# APPENDIX B



## Local Council Tax Support Public Consultation

The Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme began in April 2013. We have started planning the scheme for next year which will be effective from 1st April 2015. We have a limited amount of money available to fund LCTS and must consider how this can be used to help those most in need pay their Council Tax. Our intention is to maintain as many aspects of the current scheme as possible. If you are of state pension credit age the level of support you receive will remain unaltered.

We would like to hear your views about our plans. This questionnaire may take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Please return your completed form to LCTS Consultation, Customer Solutions, 33 Sheepen Road, Colchester, CO3 3WG.

Consultation opens Monday 18th August 2014 at 9.00 am. The closing date to receive replies is Monday 29th September 2014 at 5pm. Responses received after the deadline may not be included in the results.

This is a public consultation. It is open to anyone who would like to respond. We would particularly welcome views from: people who currently receive council tax support, voluntary and third sector organisations and taxpayers in the district.

More information is available at [www.colchester.gov.uk/lcts](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/lcts)

### **The Current Local Council Tax Support Scheme - 2014/15**

Local Council Tax Support helps those on a low income pay their Council Tax.

Some of the key considerations we have to take into account are:

Entitlement rules for those residents of pension credit age claiming Local Council Tax Support are set nationally and are unable to be amended. Vulnerable groups should be protected as far as possible. Local schemes should support work incentives and, in particular, avoid disincentives to move into work.

## **Please turn over**

**If you need help reading or understanding this form, please visit our Library and Community Hub in Trinity Square Colchester.**

## Key Features of Colchester Borough Council's current scheme for 2014/15

All working age residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support pay a minimum of 20% of their Council Tax bill

The first £25 per week that people earn is not taken into account when calculating Local Council Tax Support

Back to Work Support provides help to long-term unemployed residents who secure employment by giving them four weeks of Extended Reduction to their Council Tax

The maximum level of savings below which residents can apply for support is £6,000

There is a flat rate non-dependant deduction of £10 regardless of income or savings

Child benefit and maintenance payments are included as income when calculating entitlement

Second adult rebate claims are not accepted

## Are you currently claiming Local Council Tax Support?

Yes .....	80.5%	No .....	13.6%
Not sure .....	5.8%		

## Currently working age residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support have to pay at least 20% of their Council Tax charge each year.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If this was kept at 20% would you .....	21.5%	35.6%	18.3%	15.7%	8.9%

## There is a cost associated with administering Local Council Tax Support. In order to best use resources we could set a minimum level of entitlement for those of working age.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If a minimum level payable by us was set at £1 per week, would you .....	18.7%	29.9%	25.7%	16.6%	9.1%

For those of working age claiming Local Council Tax Support a deduction may be made for other adults living with them. This is called a non-dependant deduction. A non-dependant deduction is broadly made for any adult over the age of 18 who is not the claimant's partner or who is not living with the claimant on a commercial basis; this can include an adult son or daughter. It was agreed for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 scheme that the level of deduction would be £10 per week.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do you agree this should now be increased to £11 per week per non-dependant? .....	11.6%	28.4%	25.8%	21.6%	12.6%

## Child Maintenance is currently taken into account as an income when working out Local Council Tax Support entitlement for those of working age.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If we were not to count Child Maintenance as an additional income, would you .....	26.8%	22.6%	21.6%	18.4%	10.5%

**What would be your overall view of the proposed changes highlighted in the previous questions?**

100.0%

**An alternative option for the Local Council Tax Scheme for 2015/16 would be for all working age residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support to pay a higher contribution towards their Council Tax due instead of the current 20%.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If all working age residents had to pay at least 30% would you.....	2.2%	7.5%	11.3%	34.9%	44.1%

**What would be the impact to you if the minimum contribution for working age residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support was to increase from 20% to 30 %?**

100.0%

**If you would like to add further comments they can be included on separate piece of paper and returned with your completed form**

# About yourself

The following questions are optional but will help us to make sure that the right services are reaching the right people at the right time. To help us to make sure we are doing this correctly it would be helpful if you would answer these questions about yourself. Some of the questions may feel a little personal, but the information we collect will remain confidential and will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. Colchester Borough Council is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your answers and personal details will only be used for research purposes on Local Council Tax Support in the Borough.

## Are you male or female?

Male .....43.1% Female .....56.9%

## What is your age?

Under 20 .....0.5% 60 to 79 .....8.1%

20 to 39 .....29.6% 80+ .....0.0%

40 to 59 .....61.8%

## What is your ethnicity?

Asian or Asian British .....1.1%

Black or Black British .....2.2%

Chinese .....1.6%

Mixed .....1.1%

White .....90.2%

Other ethnic group .....3.8%

## Do you have a long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits your daily activities?

Yes .....48.6% No .....51.4%

## How will we use your personal details?

Your details will be destroyed at the close of this consultation.

## Thank you for taking part in this consultation

**Your views and comments are important to us. They will help us to improve the support we provide to our residents.**