



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

# **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022 to 2023 Consultation**

## **Appendix to Consultation Analysis Report**

**September to October 2021**

**Author:** Consultation and Engagement Team, West Northamptonshire Council

**Owner:** Executive Director, Finance, West Northamptonshire Council

# Contents

## **Appendix 1: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022 to 2023**

<b>consultation questionnaire full results .....</b>	<b>3</b>
War widows and war disablement.....	6
Care leavers .....	11
Any other comments .....	15
Demographics.....	22
<b>Appendix 2: Other responses.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Feedback receive via letters/ emails .....	27
Verbal feedback received.....	27
Feedback received via social media .....	27

DRAFT

## **Appendix 1: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022 to 2023 consultation questionnaire full results**

### **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme consultation 2022 to 2023**

#### **Overview**

The first draft budget for West Northamptonshire Council was approved for consultation by We are seeking your views on the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for West Northamptonshire Council for 2022 to 2023.

The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (sometimes known as Council Tax Support) is to help people on low income to pay their Council Tax.

Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes (LCTRS) were introduced from April 2013 when Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by locally agreed schemes. Those of pensioner age are protected by the prescribed regulations set out by central government.

By law, councils are required to have a scheme to help people on low incomes to pay their Council Tax. Each year councils needs to approve a LCTRS for the following 12 months. Where there are changes proposed, it is necessary for a public consultation to take place.

#### **What is this consultation about?**

West Northamptonshire Council set its first Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a new unitary council for the financial year 2021 to 2022. The scheme is aligned for West Northants area and the level of minimum Council Tax contribution that working age claimants must pay is 20% of their Council Tax liability.

It is important to us that we continue to support those who need financial help at the same time as offering an affordable scheme for all our Council Taxpayers.

**The proposals contained in this consultation apply to people of working age who are on a low income and currently reside in West Northamptonshire Council area.**

We are keen to ensure that all Council Taxpayers are aware of the changes being proposed and want the views of our residents and other stakeholders on the proposed changes to the scheme.

## **Our proposal for changes to the LCTRS for 2022 to 2023**

### **War widows and war disablement:**

Currently all working age claimants in receipt of a War Widows or War Disablement pension must pay a minimum contribution of 20% of their Council Tax liability.

Our proposal is to remove the minimum contribution of 20% and allow their Council Tax Reduction to be determined on 100% of their Council Tax liability whilst continuing to disregard 100% of War Pension income under our local scheme.

**Rationale:** This means that we can enhance the support offered to those residents receiving war pensions at relatively small cost to the taxpayer.

### **Care leavers:**

West Northants Council understands that the transition out of care for young people can be very challenging. We are keen to offer support for those young people who may be liable for Council Tax by giving additional financial support on top of the other Council Tax discounts that may be available.

For the financial year 2021 to 2022 funding was agreed to establish a discretionary scheme to offer this support. Care leavers aged 18 to 25 who are formerly a child in the care of West Northamptonshire Council and who reside in the West Northants area are asked to apply for the discretionary awards after statutory discounts such as single person discount and LCTRS have been applied.

The proposal for 2022 to 2023 is to include this support within the LCTRS and to allow Council Tax Reduction for care leavers to be determined on 100% of their Council Tax liability.

**Rational:** This proposed change will reduce the complexity for care leavers by only having one application process whilst also reducing the administration of the scheme.

### **Other options considered, but discarded:**

**Setting the level of minimum Council Tax contribution for working age customers at a higher level.** This option was considered but would mean a reduction in support to some of our most vulnerable residents at a time when we may not yet have realised the full impact of the pandemic.

Further information on the proposals above can be found at:

- [Cabinet Report 14 September 2021 \(PDF document 425KB\)](#)
- [Equality Screening Assessment \(PDF document 394KB\)](#)

## **Have your say**

We would like your views on our proposals for the LCTRS for 2022 to 2023. The consultation is open to all those residents, stakeholders and people representing organisations impacted by this scheme.

**This consultation will run from 20 September 2021 to midnight on 17 October 2021.**

Please tell us your views by completing the online consultation survey using the link below. Alternatively, you can email your comments using the contact details below.

The information provided by you in this survey will be used for research purposes only and it will not be used in a manner that would allow identification of individual responses.

Please contact us if you have any queries about this consultation or if you require it in another format or language. Our contact details are as follows:

- Email address: [ctrconsultation@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:ctrconsultation@westnorthants.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 01604 838640

## **What happens next**

Once the consultation closes, we will collate all the feedback received and present this information to the West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet at their meeting on 9 November 2021 to consider when making their decision on the LCTRS 2022 to 2023 for West Northamptonshire.

We will then publish full details of the new scheme in early 2022 with the changes coming into effect from April 2022.

For information about how consultation and engagement responses are managed, please see the [consultation and engagement privacy notice](#).

## Questions

### War widows and war disablement

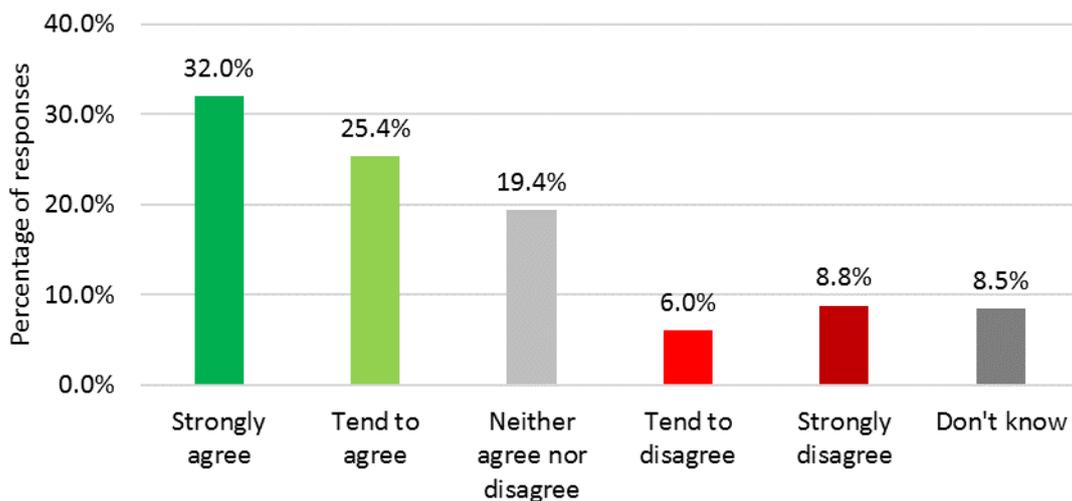
Currently all working age claimants in receipt of a War Widows or War Disablement pension must pay a minimum contribution of 20% of their Council Tax liability.

**Our proposal:** Remove the minimum contribution of 20% and allow their Council Tax Reduction to be determined on 100% of their Council Tax liability.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 284 responses to this question.

#### To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	91	32.0%
Tend to agree	72	25.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	55	19.4%
Tend to disagree	17	6.0%
Strongly disagree	25	8.8%
Don't know	24	8.5%

**Q. If you disagree with our proposal, please tell us why along with any alternative suggestions you would like to make:**

There were 52 responses to this question.

**Strongly agree/ Tend to agree**

- REDUCE COUNCIL TAX AS A WHOLE IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE. OR INVEST THE MONEY TO HAVING A TRAIN STATION THAT GOES IN LONDON CONNECTING FORM BEDFORD & LUTON.
- Should this be means tested?
- I feel we have been overcharged over the years and am a victim of hate crime via the Council. I don't understand why my council tax changes so regularly and how the amounts are so different each month. I have disabled children and i am disabled. We also receive carers allowance. The benefit system is flawed as is the Council. I feel as though you are taking my benefits straight back off me and leave me with nothing else to live on.
- I feel this be contribution should be based on what they can realistically afford
- It makes perfect sense to me to put that proposal forward
- Those who earn less and the vulnerable are already under severe financial pressure so in my humble opinion they should not pay anything. My benefit increased this year by 75p yet all bills have increased by far more and for another year my income has decreased with costs increasing. National government fund less meaning local government have to charge more why not have a new forward thinking category for those like myself pay nothing that is means tested. I live in a tiny council bedsit use less than others but pay the same? How is this fair and equitable. seeing that energy costs are being hiked up I and lots like me can only cut their food bill as all others are fixed. I can only afford 1 low quality meal aday and the thought of paying more council tax is debilitating to say the least please do all you can to hep me and the others in similar circumstances please.
- tend to agree as long as it isnt effecting other disabled people
- I do not feel that the local councils do enough for people in need with council tax discounts. If a person is unemployed they are exempt, I do not feel a state pension is enough to pay the huge coubc'i'ntzx bills we heve to pay. Also when I was a, struggling single [...] 20 yrs, ago earning 750 a month it was the one bill I could not meet or afford there was nothing to help me as a working full time single [...] with one small income. It's the same for me now as I am. Now disabled and work part time due to my disability again nothing is Done to help disabled working people. Disgraceful really,
- i think it means they may get more than 20% reduction which i think is very fair as they have served their country and deserve all the help and aid available

- I'm at a loss as to why there are exemptions for diplomats, and member of international organisation's etc. If say, they are visiting here for several months, why are you or any local councils not taking/recovering Council tax for properties that they may be staying in; for the time they are resided in UK. If they are earning a good wage/salary for their jobs then why. Like most things, if people go abroad for the UK they have to pay their way for health systems and everything else. We have all been affected by this change (more so because of Brexit) to welfare and costs (on everything); considering everything has all gone up in price; we should not I feel, be exempting such groups.
- This is something that most councils already do and supports the vulnerable.

#### **Neither agree nor disagree**

- Not all people of working age can actually work. People who are disabled etc might not have the funds to pay 20% of their liability. There should be line drawn between people who are working age and actually in work and those of working age who cannot work and will struggle to pay the 20% contribution.  
We are not saying we do not want to contribute, but the contribution for those not working should be less than for those in work.
- To be honest, the proposal as written makes no sense to me - in that I can't work out what it actually means in real life. (Though it should be noted that it also doesn't apply to me)
- I am sympathetic to the matter, however as somebody due to poor health and through no fault of my own had to give up a job i loved. Because of this and my continued poor health with a lifelong condition I am trying to survive on benefits which is not easy as it is and i would struggle even more if i had to pay out more on top of what i already pay to compensate others. I am in a position that i would rather not be and therefore i feel any reductions should be fairly distributed.
- whatever is agreed it needs to be fair, for those most in need.
- You are simply cherry picking groups who are small in number to limit the impact on your income. A consultation on the options you have already decided upon is not consultation. It is a request for confirmation of your intended action.

#### **Strongly disagree/ Tend to disagree**

- I'm only on ESA, I'm on a tight enough budget as it is...those on long term state benefits without enhancements are just above the waterline, anymore increases, you will drown us..,or is that the plan
- I do not believe the case has been made for an increase in support, which others will have to fund. I do agree with the support as it currently stands. I believe benefit provision is adequate.
- I think everyone should pay something, this would be fairer.

- I feel that reduction should be based on income and that the most needy are those on lower incomes.
- Other income should be considered not a blanket policy excluding all war widows irrespective of other income considerations.
- It should be means tested based on income.
- I'm struggling on benefits as things are why make matters worse.
- I don't think they should pay any council tax
- Unfair to this group
- To change the contributions for the two groups means the shortfall has to be found from other citizens.
- As a person on universal credit and receiving job seekers at £321.00 per month I am still liable for 20% of my council tax bill the individuals in question are receiving monies per month higher than I receive.
- Everyone should pay for services they receive
- The welfare system in this country is very unfair. A couple have two wages coming in so can share rents, electric bills, and council tax. A single person gets 20% reduction - this makes work very costly for single people. It should be 50% and we should be paid for rubbish we re-cycle. Also since libraries / swimming pools closed for covid we should get cash back. Council tax does not really pay for police or ambulance but pays off Government debt which goes to [...].  
 The welfare system in this country rewards those who never work - they get free housing and more money than folk who have worked. For example my pension went into liquidation it had [sum of money] in it - never made a penny; claims company took [sum of money] So [sum of money] paid into my bank account. Luckily DHSS let me buy car 7K to help look for work but every month I now get just £600 - my rent is £400. So I paid tax on money working going into my pension and now lose money in welfare as above 6K. Yet I know some who never work who get £65K tax free a year in welfare, free 5 bedroom house, free car etc. Also some never worked since year 2000 but they are never forced to work but people like me who look for work are easy targets and we get pressure on us all the time, even though I am [health condition]. Migrants should get no free NHS, no free education or welfare. It should be a system where you can only get out what you put in - that puts workers first. At moment too many say homeless get free council flat then move in with TVs etc.
- I am a disabled resident of a local village on benefits and due to low income I will not be able to afford any extra as I'm paying most of my money on bills. I'm also struggling to buy food and personal hygiene products. Also our UC is also being cut and gas and electric are also rising. I am struggling with serious mental health issues and this will cause more suffering to myself and others. Please reconsider this and allow us on benefits and pensions a chance to live within our means and not be in constant debt.

- There are already benefits payable to war widows and War Disablement payments. It is unfair to allow one group of people to benefit more than other needy groups.
- Not all of us are workers, some of us, like ourselves are carers. Would love to pay more but simply do not have the money.
- A War Disabled is no different that a normal disabled. Just the circumstance that caused it.
- Because at the moment they have 20% to pay but making it higher of 100% can cause alsorts of issues making it harder to pay.
- I believe that War Widows and War Disablement should get Council Tax exemption, particularly being widowed due to their spouses dying or getting disabled while defending our nation.
- Money is tight enough for people receiving such benefits and increasing council tax further is just going to cause more poverty and hardship.
- I feel that everyone should contributed something
- I'm on benefits and I pay rent out off my benifit as well as some towards my council tax me and my family don't get alot off money have to go food banks life's a struggle everything going up money going down its not fair id love to work but due to bad health I can't work for rest of my life I find it so hard to cope on money we get from state also our council tax ain't spent well on what its ment to as my area is a right mess drug dealers outside my back gate scaring my kids when in garden police do nothing same with motorbike theft list goes on
- War Widows and War Disabled people have already sacrificed enough for us
- Past experience has shown that when the system is 'simplified' it produces very little of the promised savings and results in people dropping out of the safety net of support.  
Tinkering with a issue may look good and tick certain boxes but it rarely benefits those in need.
- They may end up paying more
- Again and again governments of all flavours look to shirk their responsibilities. Stop looking at ways to stop spending on those who need help and look more towards those who rob us blind. Locally we've seen vast sums lost on failed projects and redevelopments yet Council has shrugged and said all too hard. All that lost money could have paid for the services now lost forever.
- These questions are impossible to answer without some context. If your proposal makes even some of theses people worse off then I strongly disagree.
- Benefits should be means tested. Physical and mental impairments or difficulties should rank higher than purely age.
- War widows and those suffering disablement have lost and suffered enough. A minor relief is our way of paying them back.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am on benefit income only and cannot afford higher percentage council tax increase for 2022-2023 in the working age bracket because it can have a negative effect on me living means and inturn can affect my mental health. Claim the monies back from the ppl who robbed the council funds and made us bankrupt in the first place.</li> <li>• Claimants of War Widows or War Disablement pension benefit from preferential treatment in most authorities. It creates a lot of problems when people move into the area without realising that the rules are different here to elsewhere. Also there is not much government support for military veterans considering the level of public support for them, so I think this is a worthwhile expense.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Don't know</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• n/a as i don't know anyone who is in receipt of this</li> <li>• This is poorly worded. I don't know if the suggestion is them paying no council tax or them paying 100%</li> <li>• If this would cause this sector of people financial hardship then I would strongly disagree.</li> <li>• As long as this group does not pay more than they are currently paying.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comment made but respondent did not answer previous question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think scrap tax as it's fraud ... using legalese against living men and women is a crime of high treason! Bedroom tax is a crime all the taxes fund criminal activities in government. Under the magna carter article 61 the queen had a oath to honour after the nice treaty involving Tony Blair back feb 2001. Therefore the queen holds no power over we the sovereign human beings</li> </ul>

## Care leavers

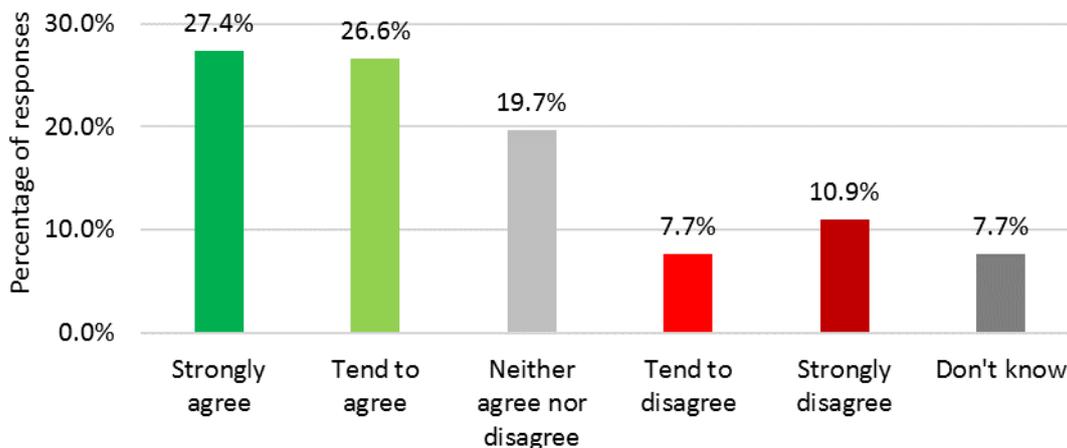
Currently care leavers, up to the age of 25, must pay a minimum contribution of 20% of their Council Tax liability.

**Our proposal:** Remove the minimum contribution of 20% and allow their Council Tax Reduction to be determined on 100% of their Council Tax liability.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?** Please tick (√) relevant answer

There were 274 responses to this question.

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?



Response number	Percentage (%)
75	27.4%
73	26.6%
54	19.7%
21	7.7%
30	10.9%
21	7.7%

### Q. If you disagree with our proposal, please tell us why along with any alternative suggestions you would like to make:

There were 47 responses to this question.

<b>Strongly agree/ Tend to agree</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People coming out of care need all the additional help they can get and phase it out slowly from 20 onwards.</li> <li>• Whilst I agree we need to support the vulnerable, we need to do so in a constructive way. if paying everything for 7 years means that they do not learn how to manage their financial affairs, its not supportive</li> </ul>
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think everyone should be treated the same.</li> <li>• To be honest, the proposal as written makes no sense to me - in that I can't work out what it actually means in real life. (Though it should be noted that it also doesn't apply to me)</li> <li>• Once again i have great empathy for other peoples circumstances but i still feel reductions should be shared equally.</li> <li>• I am not concerned by this</li> </ul>

- You are simply cherry picking groups who are small in number to limit the impact on your income. A consultation on the options you have already decided upon is not consultation. It is a request for confirmation of your intended action

### **Strongly disagree/ Tend to disagree**

- A care leaver is not necessarily on a low income
- I believe everyone should contribute something. Happy for a streamlined process, but not one that eliminates liability to contribute to cost of local services.
- I think this should apply to older people not young people and care leavers should be a factor when they are older
- We are all in the same boat on low income we all need help.
- Care leavers have a hard enough time standing on their own two feet with high rents/ housing costs and none of the usual support expected from a young persons family.
- It should be means tested based on income.
- This should be based on income
- Care leaves are more likely to have mental health issues, lower education, less or no family support and a higher rate of suicide than their peers. These issues are down to no fault of their own.
- I would propose to keep the reduction until they reach the age of 25 or reach the average uk income of £25,000 per annum.
- Shortfall has to found from other citizens.
- Again care givers obviously have some form of income/benefit so therefore should pay.
- Everyone should pay towards services they use
- I could just about manage to pay the 20% but if it goes up too 100% I will not be paying the difference as I cannot afford it.
- Do not feel that this is right. Should be based on income if working or benefits that they are currently receiving. There are many young people who are not care leavers who work hard trying to establish themselves / survive and whom may have had difficult upbringings. Again it is not morally right to benefit one group over other needy groups. It should all be income based.
- Stop giving money, that we don't seem to have, away.
- This is the same tack tick as the previous question, you upping the 100% will cause hardship to mostly everyone 20% is a lot but more capable the the latter.
- Care leavers need a good time to readjust their lives to reality, while some never get their lives back to normal. Care leavers should be given a few years exemption and then assessed to know if they still need Council Tax exemption.

- I think that the pensioners who have worked hard all their lives should get some sort of reduction especially those who struggle on a pension.
- These people require support and are going to find going out into the big wide world difficult enough without worrying about how on earth they will pay full council tax charges.
- Again I feel that everyone should pay something and 20% is already low and it should stay the same
- Make it like it was back in the day so there no poverty anymore
- Even if young people can get work, it is often very low paid
- Past experience has shown that when the system is 'simplified' it produces very little of the promised savings and results in people dropping out of the safety net of support. Tinkering with a issues may look good and tick certain boxes but it rarely benefits those in need.
- Because some of them are unable to work and are only in receipt of carers payment
- They may end up paying more
- As a mentally and physically disabled person in my 50s, I've seen the help and support I receive from the NHS and Social Services disappear completely over the past 3 years to the point where I have to pay privately for all my care and treatment because all the focus of resources seems to be on the young. It seems that the more National Insurance people have paid in over their lifetime, the less they are able to access help and support; whilst those who've contributed nothing, or very little, are favoured with the limited provisions available. This scheme is yet another example of this wholly unfair favouring of the young. My real world income has diminished completely because I'm having to pay privately for all my care, equipment and home adaptations and yet I'm not seen as deserving any special assistance to help pay for the ever increasing cost of the Council Tax. In my opinion, this scheme is discrimination of the highest and most blatant order based on age and disability. If you are planning to offer enhanced reductions under the scheme, then this should be offered to all those who are disadvantaged and not just the young. I think any decision to approve this part of the scheme could well be the subject of Judicial Review because it is so blatantly discriminatory and is thus an unreasonable exercise of the council's discretionary powers.
- Look at earlier response
- If this change goes ahead the council should make it mandatory that those entitled to a reduction are correctly informed and automatically notified. Equally so for all the other eligible groups/criteria for rebate/reductions...Example Full time Carer's reduction. My past experience of the benefits system is that you have to really research and fight for what you are entitled to the information is not forthcoming unless you are aware of what is available and can easily miss out on much needed help.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same comment as before. If you are going to make even some of these vulnerable people worse off then I strongly disagree</li> <li>• In my opinion they should pay at least 20% . Everyone should pay at least something!</li> <li>• Care leavers are extremely vulnerable and placing additional stressors upon them will end up placing more stressors on them than they already have.</li> <li>• They need more reductions</li> <li>• The age brackets seems to me they would be of working age, so therefore able to pay a contribution.</li> <li>• Who will pick up the tab for this? Let me guess.</li> <li>• In my experience care leavers tend to find themselves managing a household budget younger than other young people, and also find themselves without the skills to know what to pay when, how to apply for benefits and where to seek help. The automatic minimum payment for them takes an awful lot of pressure off them in their first few difficult years in the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Don't know</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as the last question. So poorly worded that I don't actually understand what I'm being asked</li> <li>• Once again, if this was to cause this sector of people financial hardship I would strongly disagree.</li> <li>• As long as this group does not pay more than they are currently paying.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comment made but respondent did not answer previous question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tax is illegal so therefore no tax should be being questioned.</li> <li>• Any adults who live in residential care deserve a similar treatment as they need additional support. I believe its a hate crime to penalise people. I feel as though nothing is joined up and no one talks to each other. I think this is a hate crime against those with disabilities as we get forgotten about and have our benefits taken from us. We need more support and things like this shouldn't just be for those in care etc.</li> </ul>

## Any other comments

**Q. If you have any other comments, that you have not already told us, please tell us here:**

There were 71 responses to this question.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May all read the constitution of the magna carter article 61. When the common law is up and running in the U.K. theses who have being unlawful will be tried in a common law court. Treason is a serious crime</li> <li>• At current time I do not believe benefit provision should be extended, or amounts increased. Those who pay 100% struggle enough, and funds should be directed to cutting Council Tax for all.</li> </ul>
---

- worried about UC and the uplift being removed. Ctax should be reviewed more often in general i.e what is it used to pay for and where the money goes a lot of things not being maintained etc. would like meetings from a council representative at the village so that they can listen to concerns.
- We all need the same help
- I believe that anyone on Universal Credit should receive a full discount. When Universal Credit was calculated as the minimum needed to live on, Council Tax was not included.
- I feel as though the Council are hateful towards disabled families and offer us no support. I feel as though all the contact I have with Council is hateful and nasty. I feel as though we have been kicked into a corner and have no where to turn.
- Feel that people mental health issues or physical disablement should be entitled to a greater discount on their Council Tax charge.
- Feel additional help should be given across the board and i feel as though I am being discriminated against as i am disability
- I think it should be across the board working age on low income so also not be liable for the 20 percent tax and receive 100 percent of the tax so not paying anything
- I am a carer for my disabled [spouse] and am unable to work so I can look after [them] yet I still have to pay 20% while being forced onto universal credit, making us worse off in the long run. What with the government removing another £20 a week from my universal credit I do not understand how I am expected to pay for my rent/council tax/gas/electric and food. People in our situation are always forgotten and just left to rot and expected to survive. More needs to be done for people like us.
- Remove the minimum 20% contribution for all claimants to ensure that those who cannot afford to pay council tax are not unnecessarily burdened with the same.
- People on disability this includes mobility and on benefits for mental health issues should be exempt from paying this tax as they are struggling as it is and it will also put pressure on there health
- anyone living in poverty should get a helping hand, if there is a genuine need we should help.
- Those in universal credit given help to pay their bill
- If things aren't broken, don't try to mend them! All these consultations and changes cost money. Save the money and use it for better purposes.
- What about people on benefits
- Paying council tax should be done on a means tested basis not on certain sectors.
- I am unsure but I believe everyone should be assessed on their income and outgoings I believe everyone deserves to live comfortably in this day and age and income versus essential outgoings surely is the only way to judge it

- basically the services the council provide in my area Abington is waste collection, the streets and pavements are always littered, dirty and full of pot holes, you never see a sweeper in this area and it really looks rundown to the point of i feel ashamed when i get visitors, NOT HAPPY
- I am unhappy that council tax liability for the disabled increased during to change from South northants to West northants. Disabled people on benefits who are unable to work like myself and my husband are unable to increase income to cover any corresponding increase in tax liability. Tax increases should be aimed at those best able to afford it and not the most vulnerable.
- Without everyone paying at least a percentage of their council tax it will end up with either service cuts or increases for people who don't qualify for a reduction.
- I think that the council reduction scheme should stay as it is times are hard for everyone at the moment due to the pandemic people have lost incomes,homes,jobs due to it all its unfair to increase any council tax for any family.
- We need a radical change to the welfare system, a re-cycling rubbish should be rewarded. Also many homes have multiple people living in them - you can tell by number of bin bags. Poll tax was a much fairer system than council tax as it hit the families who breed like mad. At moment they get rewarded with big council houses. Yet we see many in council homes with luxury cars outside - if they can afford to buy a luxury car they should not be in a council home. Many are drug dealers etc. The smell of cannabis comes from many council flat windows , in old days council visited properties they rented out. Council houses should go to working and married people first not those not working or those who get pregnant to get a free flat - this has caused so much problems in society with these kids joining street gangs. I don't think system works - we should just have ONE TAX to replace all taxes - this should be an assets tax - you should pay 1% a year on the value of all assets you own -so if you own a company the value of all machines would be added up and your luxury homes. People should only be allowed to own 3 properties maximum. Laws should apply to all including Royalty - at the moment they don't pay death taxes or need planning permission and we cant know who they own shares in etc. They made their money from death of [name of human race] by opium through their agents like the [name] family. [Organisation] should be banned from parliament etc
- I've personally helped and seen young people struggle with things like autism and asperges. They can barely do the forms necessary for things they need. Their anxiety and depression is real and I've witnessed a few youngsters (family related) ...transition from care home to new accommodation and not able to cope and been close to taking their own

life through despair. This would help in terms of less stress and more importantly the could get 'started in life by affording the little things they need.

- My family who all live in the West Northants area also have the same thoughts as I do as they are on benefits or pensions.
- I find the CTR scheme really helpful based on my circs , without it I would really struggle.
- I have been receiving this assistance since a change in circumstance. however, the link between variable income and council tax demands is very stressful.

you receive info from dwp, esa etc.

people on zero hour contracts get paid different monthly and the bill is recalculated and posted out every month. this is a waste of money for your office, bad for environment by increasing carbon footprint.

you need to email these things.

also for claimants that are having fluctuating income, the demand for tax should always be calculated over the 12 month period not 10.

it should be made clear the amount of extra income earned results in exactly how much council tax liability.

could be someone is financially worse off for working if you do not make it clear there is an income level thats reached which means no help is available. .eg... if someone earns £700 in one month which gets annualized, does this wipe off all discount until you get the next information from dwp? the following month they earn £100, get a new bill, reentitled to discount, its a very confusing way to portray to customers.

help should be offered not people to understand your process

- Re word your survey to actually make sense
- Consider larger reduction for single occupants
- still confused
- I believe disabled & EDLERY PEOPLE NEED MORE SUPPORT ALL ROUND
- I am currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction due to low income on benefits. I would like to continue to receive this 20% reduction as I am a single parent and any substantial increase will cause financial issues due to my strict budget.
- People struggle hard to pay the council tax on low incomes. Please bear in mind that some people are receiving a pittance to live on particularly disabled persons who can't work. While council tax is important to keep the community going please don't squander this money. I see some very pointless money wasting from councils.
- Not quite sure if fill in right but this my views on it council tax reduction scheme should carry on people are only getting them self back together after pandemic to add more tax's it will be nightmare people are struggling now and I am one of them been going to food bank to help me struggling to

pay my bills every month I can't work because of my health believe me I would and is sure I am not only one [name] ☹

- To be honest, the proposals as written makes no sense to me - in that I can't work out what they actually means in real life. (Though it should be noted that they also don't apply to me).
- We feel strongly about these proposals. My wife and I have worked all of our lives. Provided employment for others and contributed to the state through taxes. My wife should have retired at 60 but is having to wait until she, like I reached 66. We are both now in need of assistance as now both have multiple serious health issues which are life limiting for each of us. We have almost exhausted our savings and made considerable cut backs. To us, people who can not work due to ill health are just as important as the groups mentioned in this survey especially as we have paid in to the state for nearly 50 years.
- People can afford to pay what they can afford to pay. I am still fuming at how money was wasted on Angel One and the Bus Stn. Two projects that were not needed, frittering away tax payers money. You've closed down libraries and sure start centres across the county. Incompetence doesnt cover it. Now like typical Tories the poor have to pay for your incompetence!
- What about disabled children who's home has been adapted? Also the single person household?
- I think everyone who claims council tax should be awarded in category benefit people who contribute out of there money should have low payments for this as there benefits have gone down not up so they will struggle the most, people old and on war pension etc need to pay low or the same 20% no more. those that work can take the bulk load of the council tax as some earn good money and those on low incomes should pay 15% towards it. but we all can have our views wether it's taken to account and actually acted on it is another matter but people struggle more so now covid payment has gone and there the ones who have children and older people who will suffer hard as they have increased gas/elect bills to deal with without food clothing etc they have to buy to live and then they worry about council tax rising and all this while benefit stays low. its not hard to sort out. think of the people.
- Thank goodness you have realised that not all self-employed people are able to pay as if they were on the National Minimum Wage. Shame that living in your ivory towers meant that you missed this point twelve months ago.
- I thought this was going to be about everyone who gets the discount on their council tax not just for 2 different sort of people so what's happening with people who are on a low income what will they get.

- Ideas for increasing liability for working age people on reduced income due to disability is unfair. My ability as a disabled person at 50 will be the same as when I am 70. The age of the person isn't key- it's the disability.
- What about people who are disabled . The tax has gone but our benefits havent .
- i cant understand why it is only these 2 groups involved as all disabled people need extra help, and should also be considered for the 100%
- This is an incredibly difficult time for us all, but especially to those of us on legacy benefits. We have not seen an increase in what we receive unlike universal credit claimants who have received an extra £80 plus per month throughout the pandemic. I can't make ends meet as it is, so to increase the council tax, will just mean we have even less to eat!
- I think people with disabilities should get 100 percent off there tax bill
- Just want everything else to stay the same and the extra costs taking into account so that other services are not compromised.
- Concerned that the care leavers may not be able to access the correct support in order to be able to claim the benefits they are entitled to, as has experience of social workers who are abusive.
- Please see previous comments regarding lack of help to disabled part time workers such as me and working single mum's such as I was 20 yrs ago on very low income and complete lack of care or help available. Its the one bill that put me in debt to being so high that I couldn't meet
- Care leavers currently need to complete a CTR, SPD to qualify for the 100%, so those that have fluctuations in their income are penalised in the scheme. Such as care leavers do not all qualify under this scheme. Maybe they need to be less rigid and see that they qualified for CTR part of the year to qualify for the exemption
- I feel that all households should pay something towards this service 20% is already a small percentage that all should be able to afford
- Just think government should think of family's on low income for a start stop worrying about things that don't need worrying about
- A reduction for people claiming PIP
- Do you consider yourself to have a disability in line with the definition set out in section 6 of Equality Act 2010? Yes..No..Prefer not to say The above question i cannot answer as i have not seen "section 6 of Equality Act 2010?"
- What about the people who are on benefits? Like I am on Job seekers allowance income based.
- I genuinely believe that council tax should be reduced entirely as especially after the economic hardship of Covid-19 years and now major price hikes in every type of fuel. Our heating bills will be extortionate. I personally have bought an electric blanket to replace most of my gas heating for this coming winter. I will also have to make cut backs on other things i normally have.

For instance, i have [ 3x health conditions]. I shall have to cut back on as much as possible due to the enormous hikes in everything this year. My home help will be someone who won't be paid. Mind, i suppose [...]. The lesser well off don't have the ability to balance their finances with such increases. Most lower income people will be begging as it is.

- I strongly support reducing from 20% (One Fifth of the Total) to 0% the contribution that War Widow and War Disablement Pension claimants and also Care Leavers have to pay towards their council tax bill. However, why is there not in the consultation a proposal to reduce the contribution those in receipt of ESA (Employment and Support Allowance) benefit from 20% (One Fifth of the Total) to 0% too?
- There are families who do not fall into these categories but who are already struggling with their finances. If these proposals go through with the result that they have to pay a higher council tax fee to cover the cost it simply transfers the problem from one section of society to another.
- An person who is of working age. With a terminal disability shouldn't pay . Also the carers who look after them and are unable to work due to the caring of them and only receives a payment of 270.05 a month should also be excluded
- What about disabled people? You have not mentioned us at all!!Do we not count. We are on ESA and PIP and have low incomes too!!We have had help in the past are we to have help in the future?
- People on employment and support allowance who cannot work because of long term sickness should also be eligible for 100% reduction from council tax. Their disability makes them unable to improve their financial situation.
- I am in receipt of ESA and have had to pay an 80% increase in my Council Tax for the period 2021/22 over the 2020/21 period which is disgusting. How are sick and vulnerable people supposed to finance the Tory South Northants debts? I sincerely hope on behalf of all others in my position you do not penalise us next year!
- Look ar earlier response
- This year you made the most vulnerable people in South Northants considerably worse off by bringing the rate of reduction in line with the other joining areas. Why on Earth could you not just level DOWN so that the most vulnerable got a bit of a break for once. It looks like the nature of your survey intends to do the same this year. I am disabled and my contribution went from £9 per month to £23 per month. A staggering 150% increase.  
I pay this out of benefits, It doesn't make any sense. Why not just claim the funds directly from central govt and cut out the middle man and stop putting pressure on those who already are finding life tough.
- Pensioners over the age of 85 should have a 100% reduction in council tax
- Council Tax Reduction has been a great help to me.

- You are simply cherry picking groups who are small in number to limit the impact on your income. A consultation on the options you have already decided upon is not consultation. It is a request for confirmation of your intended action. Stop taking people for fools, either engage in proper consultation, or so eating money on pointless rubber stamp questionnaires
- Putting a minimum ceiling on what customers should contribute towards their liabilities can have a negative effect on customers mental health through raised anxiety and depression which then has a knock on effect with other services such as social service, Dr's, mental health services, police, ambulance etc. etc.
- These potential reductions should be made known to ALL; there are many who would not know to look or have the ability to do so.
- Just wondering if you [incomplete]

## Demographics

**Q. Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 272 responses to this question.

As an individual  
On behalf of an organisation

Response number	Percentage (%)
269	98.9%
3	1.1%

## Organisation/community group respondents

**Q. Are you responding as or on behalf of:** Please tick (✓) all that apply

There was one response to this question.

Housing Association  
Advice Agency  
Support Organisation  
Other (please specify)

Response number	Percentage (%)
0	0.0%
1	100.0%
0	0.0%
0	0.0%

Other:

- *No comments were made*

**Q. Please tell us the name of your organisation and your role / job title:**

There was one response to this question. We have not included details within this report in order to ensure respondents’ anonymity is retained.

**Individual respondents**

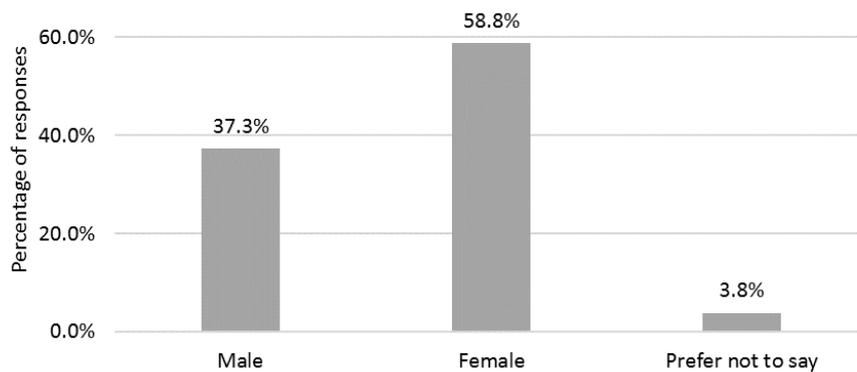
As an organisation, we collect specific demographic information from the people who take part in our consultations or complete surveys to build up an accurate understanding of the communities that we serve so that services and policies can be delivered to meet the needs of everybody, and ensure that everybody has an opportunity to have their voice heard. Please feel free to leave any questions which you do not wish to answer.

Any information you chose to provide will be treated confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation and regulations.

**Q. Are you:** Please tick (✓) the appropriate box

There were 260 responses to this question.

**Are you:**



	<b>Response number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	97	37.3%
Female	153	58.8%
Other, please state below	0	0.0%
Prefer not to say	10	3.8%

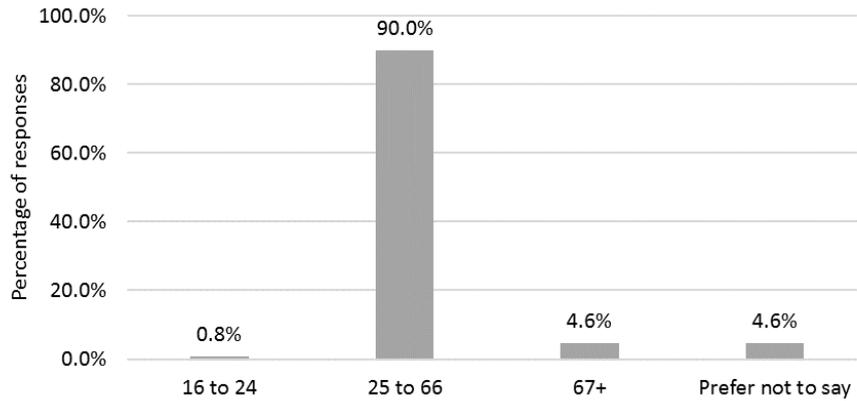
Other:

- *No comments were made*

**Q. What age band do you fall in?** Please tick (✓) the appropriate box

There were 259 responses to this question.

### What age band do you fall in?

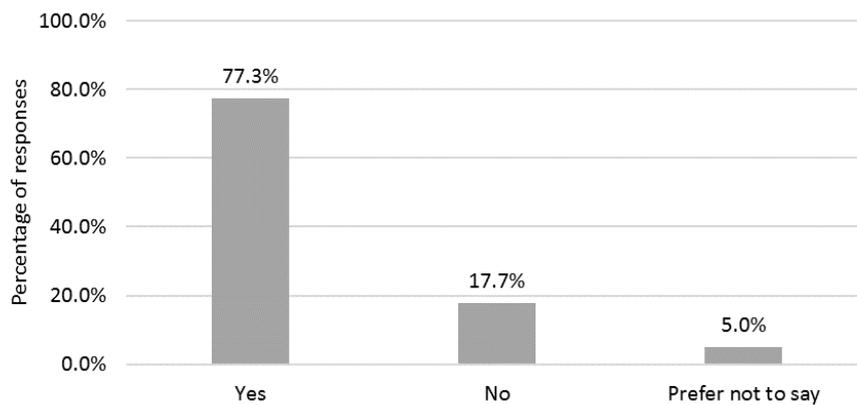


	Response number	Percentage (%)
16-24	2	0.8%
25-66	233	90.0%
67+	12	4.6%
Prefer not to say	12	4.6%

**Q. Are you currently in receipt of Local Council Tax Reduction?** Please tick (✓) the appropriate box

There were 260 responses to this question.

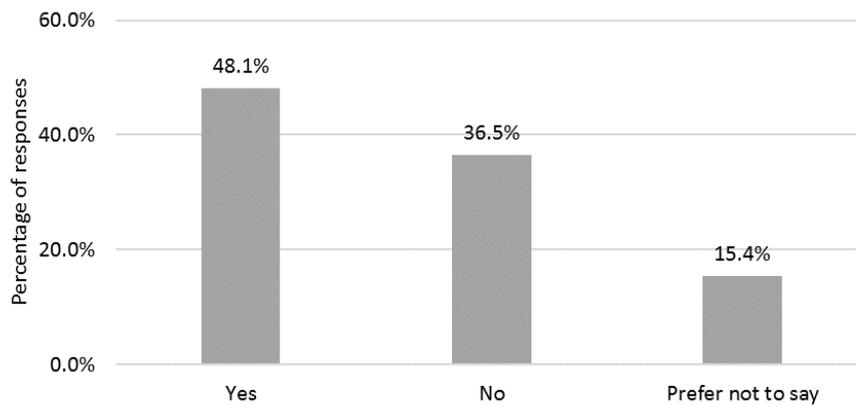
### Are you currently in receipt of Local Council Tax Reduction?



	<b>Response number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	201	77.3%
No	46	17.7%
Prefer not to say	13	5.0%

**Q. Do you consider yourself to have a disability in line with the definition set out in section 6 of Equality Act 2010?** Please tick (✓) the appropriate box  
There were 260 responses to this question.

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability in line with the definition set out in Section 6 of Equality Act 2010?**

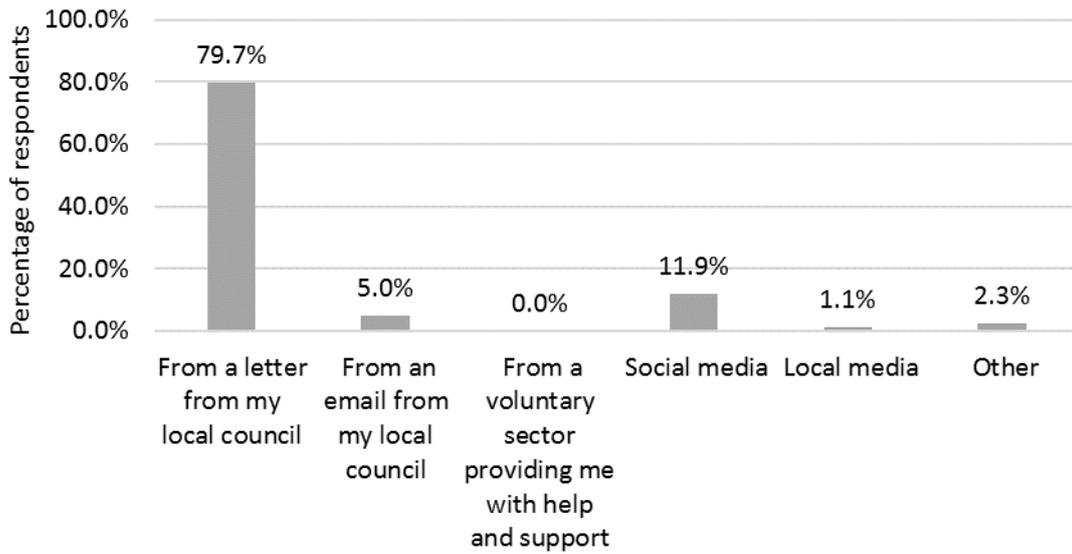


	<b>Response number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	125	48.1%
No	95	36.5%
Prefer not to say	40	15.4%

### About this consultation

**Q. How did you find out about this consultation?** Please tick (✓) all that apply  
There were 261 responses to this question.

### How did you find out about this consultation?



	Response number	Percentage (%)
From a letter from my local council	208	79.7%
From an email from my local council	13	5.0%
From a voluntary sector providing me with help and support	0	0.0%
Social media	31	11.9%
Local media	3	1.1%
Other (please give details)	6	2.3%

Other:

- WNC employee
- From someone else who received a letter
- Link didn't work on letter
- Applied directly for reduction due to low income
- Staff briefing
- Our [family member] noted it on your website.
- Parish council minutes

## **Appendix 2: Other responses**

### **Feedback receive via letters/ emails**

- There were no written responses received in relation to this consultation

### **Verbal feedback received**

- If the Council did more to enforce payment from non-payers then we could reduce the 20% threshold for customers in receipt of JSA.

### **Feedback received via social media**

- So basically you are targeting those groups on low incomes who are the smallest in number, so that you don't lose out overall on income?
- Don't bother with this. I was sent a letter via Royal Mail as I qualify for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. It's just a few questions asking if the reduction should stay at 20% or be worked out on a percentage of 100%. Waste of time.
- Can you explain to us why you have only chosen groups that are low in number? I am sure they deserve support, but are you not simply cherry picking the smallest need groups so that you have to pay out the least discount?