

Herefordshire Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022/23 Consultation - Final

1. Background to the Consultation




1. I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme: This question must be answered before you can continue.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	<div style="width: 100%; height: 10px; background-color: #0070C0;"></div>	100.00%	36
2	No		0.00%	0
			answered	36
			skipped	0

2. Paying for the Scheme

2. Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction scheme? (Should it continue to administer the scheme as it does at the moment?)				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	<div style="width: 39.29%; height: 10px; background-color: #0070C0;"></div>	39.29%	11
2	No	<div style="width: 57.14%; height: 10px; background-color: #FF8C00;"></div>	57.14%	16
3	Don't Know	<div style="width: 3.57%; height: 10px; background-color: #008000;"></div>	3.57%	1
			answered	28
			skipped	8



3. Please use the space below to make any comments you have on protecting the Council Tax Reduction Scheme from these changes.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	3
1		The new proposed schemes will negatively impact those who are struggling or scraping by whether due to low pay, high debt or physical or mental impairment. Changing the scheme will literally take food from people's plates. Herefordshire does not have a robust support system in place to deal with the impact of forcing those who are struggling to pay council tax		
2		I live in one of the highest paying council tax areas in the country due to dodgy decisions by people I jhave no knowledge of. That's a bit unfair!		
3		Those of us who can't get council tax reductions can't afford to keep having year on year above inflation council tax rises. The council tax reduction scheme must be curtailed.		
			answered	3
			skipped	33

3. Option 1 – The introduction of an Income Grid scheme to replace the current scheme for all applicants of working age

4. Do you agree with the changes to the scheme to introduce an income based banded discount scheme?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		75.00%	18
2	No		16.67%	4
3	Don't Know		8.33%	2
			answered	24
			skipped	12

5. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	2
1		You should increase the requirement to offset those that pay in full reducing the benefit allowance and encouraging those claiming to get jobs		
2		See previous comments.		
			answered	2
			skipped	34

4. Option 2 - To limit the number of dependant children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two for all applicants



6. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		63.64%	14
2	No		36.36%	8
3	Don't Know		0.00%	0
			answered	22
			skipped	14

7. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	6
1	I think it's unfair to penalise somebody for having 2+ children.		
2	Having to apply for additional support through the LAF adds another layer		
3	The LAF has too narrow a scope to provide help for all those who will need to apply.		
4	If you have three or more children then I think you should be entitled to more of due to the cost of children and no other benefits allowed for third child.		
5	To those it applies to, charging both parents for the tax and if they refuse to say who the other person is, withdraw the benefit or limit to one child		
6	I disagree with the principle of limiting UC benefits to just two dependent children, and therefore disagree with restricting the discount scheme in this way. All other things equal, the pressure on family budgets increases as a function of the number of dependents. The primary objective of the discount scheme is to alleviate hardship, and there is no good reason for restricting the number of dependents in the way proposed.		
		answered	6
		skipped	30

5. Option 3 – To remove Non-Dependant Deductions from the scheme

8. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	75.00%	15
2	No 	25.00%	5
3	Don't Know	0.00%	0
		answered	20
		skipped	16

9. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?




Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	4
1	Because you could have high earner non deps who can afford the charge		
2	Agree with the existing policy which states 'the applicant should look to recoup this deduction from those adults'. I think it would be unfair to change the policy to not take in to account a third child in a family who is a dependant whilst changing the policy to make allowances for adult children who are not dependant. I don't think it is necessary to change the scheme on this point.		

9. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

3	Most people living as a non-dependant do so because living elsewhere is not financially viable. The applicant will not be able to recoup monies lost. Stick to the current system		
4	If there are other adults in the household then its ability to pay should be higher, and this should justify a reduction in the discount they receive. So retain the present deductions.		
		answered	4
		skipped	32

6. Option 4 – Disregarding Carers Allowance, the Support Component of the Employment and Support Allowance, the housing, disabled child, limited capability for work, childcare and carer elements of Universal Credit

10. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?


Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		80.00%	16
2	No		15.00%	3
3	Don't Know		5.00%	1
			answered	20
			skipped	16

11. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	1
1	The focus is too narrow - this will heavily impact vulnerable adults receiving PIP etc. Stick to the current system			
			answered	1
			skipped	35

7. Option 5 – Removing the current earnings disregards and replacing them with a standard £25 disregard for all working applicants

12. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		65.00%	13

12. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

2	No		15.00%	3
3	Don't Know		20.00%	4
			answered	20
			skipped	16

13. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	3
1	Larger families generally have larger homes and child benefit would not compensate for this. Additionally, child benefit is for providing essential items for the child, not paying household bills. Stick to the current system		
2	Will put bigger families in poverty		
3	I think the benefits of tailoring discounts to needs, which vary according to individual circumstances. So retain the present scheme.		
		answered	3
		skipped	33

8. Option 6 - To allow further income disregards where an applicant, their partner or any dependant is in receipt of a disability benefit

14. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes		80.00%	16
2	No		10.00%	2
3	Don't Know		10.00%	2
		answered	20	
		skipped	16	

15. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?



Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	2

15. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

1		This has potential but the disability benefits system is fundamentally flawed and there are many people who are deprived of it when they shouldn't be. Concern should be given to these people as well	
2		No	
		answered	2
		skipped	34

9. Option 7 – Removing the Extended Payment provision

16. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes		65.00% 13	
2	No		35.00% 7	
3	Don't Know		0.00% 0	
			answered	20
			skipped	16

17. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?




Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00% 3	
1		It's a good thing to do and relatively inexpensive		
2		It would be good but needs to extend into those in receipt of legacy benefits		
3		Will make things financially worse for people especially when awaiting more income		
			answered	3
			skipped	33

10. Option 8 – Any new claim or change in circumstances which changes Council Tax Reduction entitlement will be made from the date on which the change occurs, (rather than on a weekly basis as at present)

18. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
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18. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?




1	Yes		80.00%	16
2	No		15.00%	3
3	Don't Know		5.00%	1
			answered	20
			skipped	16

19. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Open-Ended Question	0.00%	0	
No answers found.				
			answered	0
			skipped	36

11. Option 9 – Extending the ‘backdating’ provisions within the scheme




20. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

1	Yes		70.00%	14
2	No		15.00%	3
3	Don't Know		15.00%	3
			answered	20
			skipped	16

21. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?



Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	2	
1	Think it should stay at 3months as feel 12 people will take the mick			
2	can you backdate on where you paid too much too?			
			answered	2
			skipped	34

12. Option 10 – Introducing a Minimum Income Floor for certain self employed applicants

22. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		50.00%	10
2	No		45.00%	9
3	Don't Know		5.00%	1
			answered	20
			skipped	16

23. If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	4
1		The assumption is unfair		
2		I don't think this would work, self-employed people can earn so much in a month that they would not be entitled but much less the following month so they would need to reapply, this would mean lots of time spent by the council and the applicant being reassessed as they jump on and off the scheme		
3		a lot doesn't go through the books		
4		I believe Herefordshire has a higher proportion of self employed earners than the average for the region, also earnings are lower than the national average. Many of those who run small businesses or retail business in the market towns will have faced significant income reductions during the pandemic, and whilst local restriction grants and additional universal credit payments have provided financial support to many, this support will not be in place in 2022. By assuming people earn the national living wage, in line with universal credit rules, this will double the reduction in financial support they will get potentially resulting in businesses closing down. A proposed alternative would be to continue to base financial support on the actual net profit for 2022/2023 giving those businesses chance to recover after the pandemic and review the decision again for 2023/24.		
			answered	4
			skipped	32




13. Alternatives to changing the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

24. Increase the level of Council Tax to cover the rising administration costs.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		5.00%	1
2	No		95.00%	19

24. Increase the level of Council Tax to cover the rising administration costs.

3	Don't Know		0.00%	0
			answered	20
			skipped	16

25. Find the additional administration costs by cutting other Council Services.

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		35.00%	7
2	No		60.00%	12
3	Don't Know		5.00%	1
			answered	20
			skipped	16

26. Please use this space to make any other comments on the proposed scheme.

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	6
1		Cap salaries over £100 000 . No increase and not replace anybody leaving at salary level		
2		I'm sure that staffing levels could be reviewed in the council to help with budgeting.		
3		I don't think it should be increased again. Everything is rising minus wages and it is putting a big strain on people. The costs of administration should come from elsewhere.		
4		I drove buses in Herefordshire and carried no people on some routes. Why are they in use?		
5		Reduce the tax for all. Stop wasting money on new buildings - moving - high wages - outrageous expense claims - over staffing - remove mid management and reduce the bill for all. Also review the social care subsidy - you need to check who you are paying and for what as there are millions being claimed where they shouldn't be		
6		In general the proposals to simplify the scheme, making it easier to understand and administer make sense. The removal of non-dependant deductions should improve council tax collection rates, and those with disabilities keep additional support. However I don't agree with reducing financial support to the self employed at this time. It is difficult to know from the information provided in this consultation how many people this will affect and by how much, but this could have an adverse effect on council tax collection rates and result in some small businesses being forced to close rather than face court summons for non payment of council tax. The Council is currently promoting 'the spirit of Herefordshire' and often quotes the value of small business enterprises, so why reduce financial support without giving these businesses time to recover from the pandemic?		
			answered	6
			skipped	30

27. Please use the space below if you would like the Council to consider any other options (please state).

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	4
1	Reduce high salaried staff over £100 000		
2	Raising admin costs will deprive applicants of much needed funds, which is an issue across many of the proposed schemes and cutting another service to fund the change will do the same albeit in a different way. Extremely careful consideration needs to be given to any changes to council tax as the ramifications are significant.		
3	Cut the ceo salary and make the people in town councils pay for their own mistakes like ant other organisation not the people in general		
4	Means test more - Investigate those that do claim as again, millions being claimed by those who are more than capable of getting a job. They prefer benefit rather than doing jobs "beneath" them. The money you save by getting rid of overpaid middle management and removing your bloated "moving / building" bills will pay for those investigators required to get rid of the false claimers, saving us yet more money.		
		answered	4
		skipped	32

28. If you have any further comments or questions to make regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme that you haven't had opportunity to raise elsewhere, please use the space below.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	1
1	As several of the proposed changes could apply to a household you have indicated there will be winners and losers, but the extent of the overall loss or gain on a particular household isn't easy to understand from the information provided in the consultation. Providing examples of the financial gain/loss on some households moving from the current scheme to the proposed scheme would help to form an overall opinion which may have resulted in a different response to the individual options.		
		answered	1
		skipped	35

14. About You

29. Are you completing this form on behalf of an organisation or group?


Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	5.00%	1
2	No	95.00%	19
		answered	20
		skipped	16

If yes, please tell us the name of the organisation/group and add any other comments you wish to make.



Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	1
1	Red Lion Public House, Cradley WR13 5NN		
		answered	1
		skipped	35

15. Questions for Individuals



30. Do you live in Herefordshire?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	100.00%	18
2	No	0.00%	0
		answered	18
		skipped	18



31. Are you currently receiving Council Tax Reduction?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	5.56%	1
2	No 	94.44%	17
		answered	18
		skipped	18



32. Are you or your partner in work or self employed?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	70.59%	12
2	No 	29.41%	5
		answered	17
		skipped	19


33. Are you liable to pay Council Tax?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		94.12% 16
2	No		5.88% 1
		answered	17
		skipped	19




34. Do you have three or more pre-school or school age children in your household?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		11.76% 2
2	No		88.24% 15
		answered	17
		skipped	19

35. Are you currently serving in the Armed Forces?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		0.00% 0
2	No		100.00% 17
		answered	17
		skipped	19

36. What is your sex?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male		29.41% 5
2	Female		52.94% 9
3	Prefer not to say		17.65% 3
		answered	17
		skipped	19

37. What is your age

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	18-24	0.00%	0
2	25-34	23.53%	4
3	35-44	11.76%	2
4	45-54	29.41%	5
5	55-64	11.76%	2
6	65-74	0.00%	0
7	75-84	5.88%	1
8	85+	0.00%	0
9	Prefer not to say	17.65%	3
		answered	17
		skipped	19

38. Disability: 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?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	11.76%	2
2	No	76.47%	13
3	Don't know	0.00%	0
4	Prefer not to say	11.76%	2
		answered	17
		skipped	19

39. Ethnic Origin: What is your ethnic group?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to say	23.53%	4
2	White British	76.47%	13
3	White Irish	0.00%	0
4	White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0
5	Any other White background	0.00%	0

39. Ethnic Origin: What is your ethnic group?

6	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Black African	0.00%	0
7	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
8	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Asian	0.00%	0
9	Any other multi mixed background	0.00%	0
10	Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0.00%	0
11	Asian or Asian British Indian	0.00%	0
12	Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
13	Asian or Asian British Chinese	0.00%	0
14	Any other Asian background	0.00%	0
15	Black African	0.00%	0
16	British Caribbean	0.00%	0
17	Black British	0.00%	0
18	Any other Black background	0.00%	0
		answered	17
		skipped	19

40. Other ethnic group?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	0.00%	0
No answers found.			
		answered	0
		skipped	36