

Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation

1. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 inserted a new schedule, schedule 1A into The Local Government Finance Act 1992.
2. The schedule provides certain matters that must be included in a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the preparation that must be undertaken prior to the adoption or revision of a scheme.
3. Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1A provides that before making a scheme [or before revising a scheme] the authority must (in the following order):
 - a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it;
 - b) publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit; and
 - c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.
4. In accordance with legislation and guidance it is intended that two phases of consultation will take place.
5. Phase 1 will set out possible options for change. The consultation will consist of:
 - a mailshot to all current working age Council Tax Support Scheme claimants.
 - an online survey;
 - mailshot directly to preceptors and other major stakeholders such as registered social landlords;
 - copies of survey to be handed out at the BDC Customer Service Centre and BDHT offices.
 - a copy of the survey insert in random mailings to council tax customers during the consultation period.

residents and others would be advised via press releases and social media that the consultation is taking place and inviting responses.
6. Phase 1 will take place over 4 weeks in late April and early May.
7. A further period of statutory consultation must take place on the Draft Scheme ahead of final decision making by the Cabinet and Council in November.
8. Phase 2 consultation on the proposed draft scheme will take place over 6 weeks in August and September.
9. This will ask for comments on the draft scheme and again will consist of a mailshot to all current working age Council Tax Support Scheme claimants and to preceptors and other major stakeholders such as registered social landlords, asking for comments to be made via email or in writing. In addition all residents will be made aware via press releases and social media that a draft scheme had been published and inviting comment.