

Appendix Two

Format and Questions - Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation

Bromsgrove District Council

Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2019

Background to the consultation

What is the consultation about?

Each year Bromsgrove District Council has to decide whether to change the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for working age people in its area. This year, we are deciding whether changes should be made to increase the maximum level of support we give to working age claimants and deciding whether young people leaving care should pay Council Tax.

What is Local Council Tax Support?

Council Tax Support is a Council Tax discount. The level of the discount awarded is based on the income of the household. The maximum discount that a working age household can receive is currently 80%, a discount of up to 100% is available for pensioners.

Why is a change to the Council Tax Support Scheme being considered?

Until April 2013 there was a national scheme called Council Tax Benefit. Local Councils became responsible for Local Council Tax Support Schemes from 1st April 2013. The Council aims to keep its Council Tax Support Scheme aligned with welfare benefits such as Housing Benefit and Universal Credit to assist in administration. As those benefits change, similar changes need to be made to the Council Tax Support Scheme. The Local Council Tax Support schemes also allow more support to be given to groups of people that we identify as vulnerable or in need of greater levels of support.

There are three reasons why we are proposing changes to our Council Tax support scheme, these are

1. To maintain a link between Local Council Tax Support and national welfare benefits.

We make changes to personal allowances and income disregards so that the Council Tax Support Scheme is determined in line with national benefits.

2. To consider increasing the level of Council Tax Support to a maximum of 85%

At present working age claimants receive a maximum level of support of 80%, we are asking whether this maximum amount of support should be increased to 85%.

3. To provide support to young people leaving local authority care.

All Local Authorities have a special responsibility for the wellbeing of Children in Care and Care Leavers. This role is known as being a Corporate Parent, and as Corporate Parents, Bromsgrove District Council, wants to support all children and young people to achieve the best in their childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

We understand that young people leaving care rarely have the support that families can offer to help them become independent. The Government and The Children's Society agree that care leavers need additional support and that all local authorities have a role to play in providing this support.

Care leavers who live in their own homes are liable for the full Council Tax, and at present can receive up to 80% Council Tax Support which is reduced as their income increases. We are asking whether Care Leaver under 21 should receive 100% Council Tax support, regardless of income, and whether care leavers aged 21 to 25 should have a tapered level of support.

Questions

I have read the background information about the Council Tax Support Scheme and the reasons for consultation?

Yes No

I agree that the Council Tax Support Scheme should be amended so that personal allowances remain in line with national benefits?

Yes No

The Current Council Tax support scheme allows working age claimants a maximum level of support of 80% - as their income increases they lose support. For every £1.00 that their income increases the level of support is reduced by 20p. Increasing the maximum level of support to 85% of liability would have an estimated cost of £100,000

Should the Council keep the current Council Tax support scheme?

Yes No

Should the Council increase the level of support to 85%?

Yes No

Extra Support for Care Leavers

Young people leaving care and moving into their own homes will be liable for Council Tax. If they are not working or they are on a low income then the maximum amount of Council Tax support they can receive at present would be 80% of their liability.

We are asking whether you agree that care leavers, because they do not have the same family support networks as other young people, should receive additional support.

Do you agree that Care Leavers under 21 years of age should receive 100% Council Tax Support?

Yes No

Should this support to young care leavers be reduced as their income increases?

Yes No

Should care leavers aged 21 to 25 continue to receive Council Tax support regardless of their income?

Yes No

Should support for care leavers aged 21 to 25 be provided up to a maximum of 100% and reduced as their income increases?

- Yes No

At what age do you think care leavers should be treated in the same way as other young people?

- 18 19 20

- 21 22 23

- 24 25

Do you receive Local Council Tax Support?

- Yes No

Do you pay Council Tax to Bromsgrove District Council?

- Yes No