



London Borough of Bromley
Council Tax Reduction – Consultation Report

27 October 2017

1. Details of Recommendations

The council is asked to agree the following:

- 1.1 To note the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for Bromley residents is to come into effect from 1st April 2018.
- 1.2 To note the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken with regard to the proposed scheme.
- 1.3 To note the findings on equalities and other impacts arising from the proposed Scheme.
- 1.4 To approve the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for Bromley at Full Council on 11th December 2017. A consultation exercise was undertaken to seek residents views as to whether to continue to grant Council Tax Reduction for working-age claimants at a maximum of 75% of Council Tax liability.

2. Report Summary

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the previous system of Council Tax Benefit with effect from 31st March 2013. Its replacement, Localised Support for Council Tax, was introduced from 1st April 2013 through Council Tax Reduction.

Bromley formally approved a scheme limiting increases to 8.5% of Council Tax liability for 2013/14, rising to 19% in 2014/15 and 25% for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

This report is to approve the new scheme, this will be required to be formally approved at full council on 11th December 2017 for the next financial year commencing 1st April 2018.

The proposal is to retain the scheme rules from 2017/18 for the financial year 2018/19 and continue to grant Council Tax Reduction under the scheme to a maximum of 75% of Council Tax liability.

This reports sets out:

The background to the design of a local scheme of Council Tax Reduction for 2018/19 for the London Borough of Bromley and details of the interaction with legislation and guidance supplied by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Details the proposed scheme of Council Tax Reduction for Bromley, recognising that the matter is one which will need to be approved by full Council.

Details of the consultation exercise undertaken on the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme during a period from 14th August 2017 until 6th October 2017.

The financial implications of the proposed scheme for Council Tax Reduction for the residents of Bromley and risks associated with the design of a local scheme.

3. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the existing system of Council Tax Benefit with effect from 31st March 2013. Its replacement, Localised Support for Council Tax was introduced from 1st April 2013 and was contained within the Local Government Finance Act which received Royal Assent on 31st October 2012

There are a number of key differences between the two schemes of assistance with Council tax liabilities. These include the fact that responsibility has changed from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

In addition the funding regime changed from being demand-led Annual Managed Expenditure (AME).

While Bromley was able to design its own scheme to support working age applicants, the Government desire to protect those of state pension credit age resulted in centrally provided legislation covering those in this group.

These Prescribed Regulations introduced a Statutory Scheme, similar to the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme, for those of pensionable age and also maintain previous provisions with regard to limiting entitlement to those classed as Persons From Abroad and deal with minor administrative issues. These provisions are replicated for 2018/19 subject to any legislative amendments that may be imposed by Central Government.

Once a local Council Tax Reduction scheme has been made by the Council, it cannot be revised for at least one financial year. A Billing Authority must however *consider* whether to revise or replace its scheme with another one on an annual basis.

Any revision to a scheme must be made by the Council by the 31st January immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect and will require consultation arrangements to be applied. Additionally, consideration must be given to providing transitional protection where the support is to be reduced or removed.

3.1 Options requiring review.

Option	Comments
1. Retain the current (17/18) scheme, effectively limiting Council Tax Reduction to 75% of liability	This would mean no increase in Council Tax Reduction levels for 18/19 to households whose circumstances remain unchanged.
2. Introduce a two-child limit for the personal allowance, for claimants with dependant children, for new claims. Exceptions would be considered in line with current DWP legislation for Housing Benefit.	This would increase council tax bills for these households. This could increase arrears as they may not be able to pay the higher bills.
3. Limit period for temporary absence from GB to 4 weeks for entitlement to claim for Council Tax Reduction.	The reduced support would increase council tax bills to these households if they are temporary absent from GB for more than 4 weeks.
4. No longer increasing the applicable amount for new claims made by those in the Work Related Activity Group of Employment Support Allowance when they move onto Main Phase ESA.	This would affect claimants who are in the Work-Related Activity Group who would not see an increase in Council Tax Reduction levels when they moved onto main phase Employment Support Allowance.

4. Key Implications

The proposed Council Tax Reduction scheme for Bromley for 2018/19 has been established with due regard to the Council's statutory obligations, consultation responses and in order to attempt to distribute the reduced funding available amongst those claimants most in need of financial assistance, while still achieving the necessary financial savings to meet the funding deficit.

Bromley again proposes to follow the DCLG Prescribed Scheme for those who have reached pensionable age, ensuring that they are protected from the effects of the funding reduction and continue to receive assistance with their Council Tax liability as now.

It is intended that the working age scheme will continue to be based on the rules introduced for 2013/14. This largely mirrored the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme with the exception of protecting the level of support relevant classes of individual's receive. This adjustment was required in order to pass on the reduction in funding received.

The outline principles for the Bromley working age Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme for 2018/19 are:

- All working age customers will have to make some payment towards their council tax as the maximum help under the Council Tax Reduction scheme available for residents of London Borough of Bromley will be limited to 75% of the charge.
- The scheme will be reviewed annually.
- Non-dependant deductions will be aligned with any increase supplied by DCLG in the Prescribed Requirement Regulations updates and will be in line with the pensioner claims.

- Applicable amounts will be up-rated or frozen in line with Housing Benefits for working age claimants.

The scheme will also be adapted to meet any further legislative requirements imposed by DCLG and consideration will be given as to how to determine income from benefits established under the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Other requirements

A number of other scheme principles introduced in 2013/14 will be carried forward to 2018/19;

- New customers will be required to complete an application form for all new claims from 1 April 2018, existing awards under the 2017/18 scheme will continue in payment, where entitlement remains.
- The scheme allows for a review period. The period will be agreed and failure by the customer to provide details requested may mean their entitlement to CTR is ended.
- Any award or adjustment will be confirmed in the council tax bill but the bill itself will not be formal notification and a separate notification of entitlement will be supplied.
- Where awarded the notification letter will also:
 - a) inform the applicant that there is a duty to notify the authority of the relevant change in circumstances
 - b) explain the possible consequences (including prosecution) of failing to comply with that duty; and
 - c) set out the circumstances in which a change of circumstances might affect entitlement
- Any “overpayments” of CTR will be reclaimed by recovery through the council tax billing process
- Where an applicant is aggrieved about a decision regarding entitlement they may appeal under Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- A person may only appeal to the Valuation Tribunal where:
 - a) They are notified in writing by the authority that it believes the grievance is not well founded, but they are still aggrieved;
 - b) They are notified in writing that steps have been taken to deal with the grievance, but they are still aggrieved; or
 - c) The period of two months, beginning with the date of service of their notice being ended, has elapsed and they have not received notification under paragraph a) or b) above.

Level of Entitlement

Bromley made a decision, for the 2017/18 scheme, to pass on a maximum of 25% of the cost (resulting in a maximum entitlement, for working age claimants, of 75% of their liability).

The proposal for 2018/19 is to continue with this level of support and limit working age recipients to 75% of their council tax liability.

5. Financial Details

Financial Impact On The Budget (Mandatory)

Costs of 2018/19 Scheme

Specific central government grant levels for Council Tax Reduction now form part of the overall Revenue Support Grant and are not therefore distinguishable.

6. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

Equality Impact Assessment

The Council has to give due regard to its Equalities Duties, in particular with respect to general duties arising pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, section 149. Having due regard to the need to advance equality involves, in particular, to the need to remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

The Council's tax system is programmed to identify all Council Tax Reduction accounts. The Council keeps under review the impact of the revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme and has found no evidence to indicate that any equalities protected groups have been disproportionately affected by the operation of the scheme.

Specific regard has also been paid to the guidance provided by DCLG which will also provide mitigation to minimise disadvantage to those most likely to experience disadvantage.

The previous Equalities Analysis has been updated to reflect the options proposed in the consultation exercise. This can be found as enclosure 1 to the Executive Report entitled "Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme 2018/19". For information, the document is on the Council's website via the URL link below:

www.bromley.gov.uk/CouncilTaxSupport

Incentivising Work

It is again intended that Bromley will incentivise work by continuing the disregards of weekly income currently offered which are dependent upon the applicant's status:

- Lone parent £25 per week
- Disabled individual or carer £20 per week
- Single person £5 per week and Couple £10 per week

Where the applicant pays child care costs in order to achieve employment an additional weekly disregard of up to £175 (for 1 child) or £300 (for 2 or more children) from earnings will apply subject to the circumstances of the applicant and age of the child.

Where the applicant works in excess of 30 hours per week a further disregard of at least £17.10 will apply.

Customers who have been out of work, and receiving an appropriate benefit for 26 weeks, will receive an Extended Payment of Council Tax Reduction, at the same rate as they received when out of work, for the first 4 weeks of their new employment.

Child Poverty

It is intended that Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance will be disregarded as income types during the means tested assessment of Council Tax Reduction.

Access to relevant dependants allowances and family premiums within the applicable amount calculation will continue where applicants have responsibility for children and have been continuously in receipt of CTR since prior to 1st April 2016.

Armed Forces

Income derived from war widow's/widower's pensions, war disablement pensions or Guaranteed Income Payments from the Armed Forces/Reserve Forces Compensation Fund will be fully disregarded during the means tested assessment of Council Tax Reduction, whether for working or pensionable age applicants.

Disabled Applicants

Income derived from Disability Living Allowance or its replacement (Personal Independence Payments) and Attendance Allowance will be fully disregarded but receipt of such benefits will allow access to premiums within the applicable amount calculation.

There will be no non-dependant deduction taken as a result of the claimant or partner receiving Disability Living Allowance (care component), Attendance Allowance, the daily living component of PIP or where the claimant or partner is registered blind.

7. Consultation

A public consultation exercise was undertaken for the 18/19 Council Tax Reduction Scheme during a period from 14th August 2017 until 6th October 2017.

The survey was available through a variety of channels:

- A link was available on the Bromley website
- An e-mail alert was issued to all Portal users advising them of the survey
- A paper copy was issued to 2,000 households comprising of a mix of CTR recipients and non CTR recipients (1,000 households not in receipt of CTR, 500 recipients of working age and 500 recipients of pensionable age)
- A paper flyer enclosed with all Council Tax Bills issued during this period advising of the link on the website.

In total there were 1,125 responses received with the majority, 762, being via the website and 363 by post.

Supplementary questions were asked, for monitoring purposes, to determine whether respondents were currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or were completing the consultation on behalf of a representative body.

Of those who chose to respond to these questions, 70% stated that they were not currently in receipt of CTR.

Responses were received from only 3 representative bodies, these were:

- Age UK
- St Christopher's Bromley (Hospice)
- Zacchaeus 2000 Trust

The consultation exercise was based on 7 simple questions to residents of the Borough, 4 of which required specific responses with the remaining 3 being less direct and allowing a degree of free text response.

Of those that were specific, they sought responses in respect of:

Q1: Whether it was agreeable to maintain the level of assistance at 75%

Q2: If LBB were to increase the level of support, how should this be funded?

Q3: Whether there should be a hardship fund available and whether the sum of £100,000 was reasonable.

Q4: To align the Council Tax Support Scheme with changes made to Housing Benefit rules:

- **Whether entitlement to Council Tax Support to customers who leave Great Britain temporarily should be reduced to 4 weeks?**
- **Whether Council Tax Support only covers the costs of 2 children in families rather than unlimited numbers of children?**
- **Whether customers in receipt of Employment Support Allowance should only receive additional assistance if they are in the Support Group?**

Standard Equality and Diversity questions were also asked but it was made clear that providing this information was voluntary.

8. Outcomes.

Details of the full consultation question and analysis responses, both overall and broken down, are detailed below.

Question 1.

Q1 The Council is recommending for 2017/18 the retention of the current maximum level of support for working-age claimants. The maximum level of support being 75% of the households Council Tax liability after any discounts or exemptions have been applied. This would require working age claimants to pay a minimum of 25% of their liability.

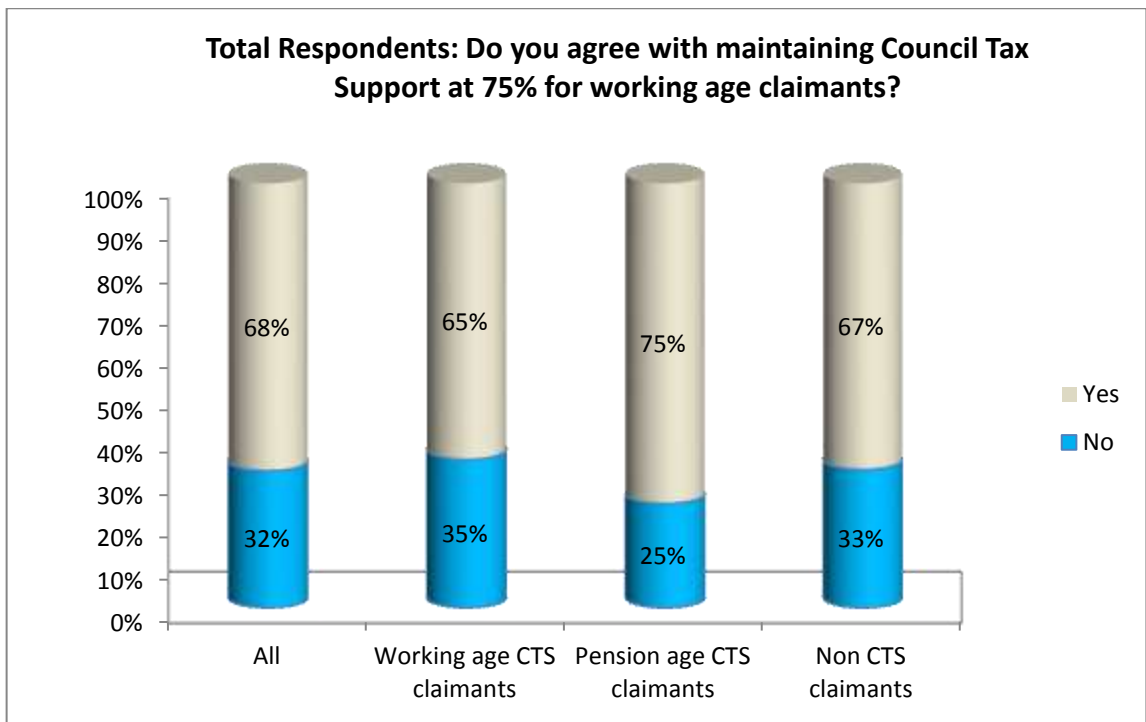
	Yes	No
Please confirm whether you:		
a. Agree with maintaining the assistance at 75%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. If NO do you think Council Tax Support claimants should;		
<i>Pay more Council Tax e.g. receive less support</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Pay less Council Tax e.g. receive more support to</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you disagree with maintaining assistance for working-age claimants at 75%, please state why:

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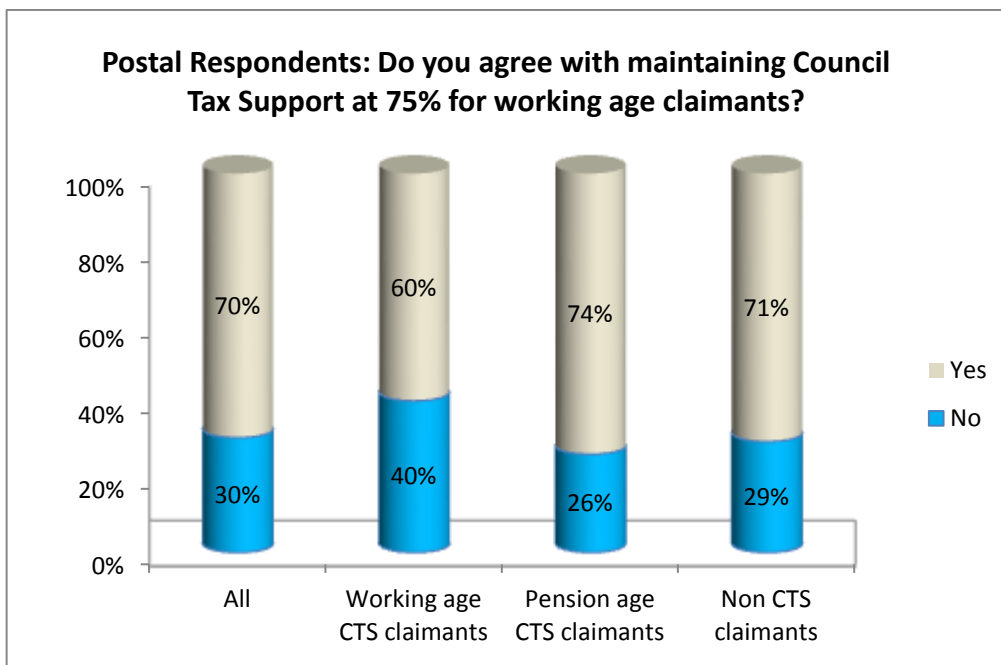
Overall response.

Of those who responded the *overall* outcome was that they wished to keep the scheme the same with 68% confirming this to be their preference. This was the same percentage when this question was asked last year. The responses were weighted in favour of keeping support at this level irrespective of whether the respondent was in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or not.

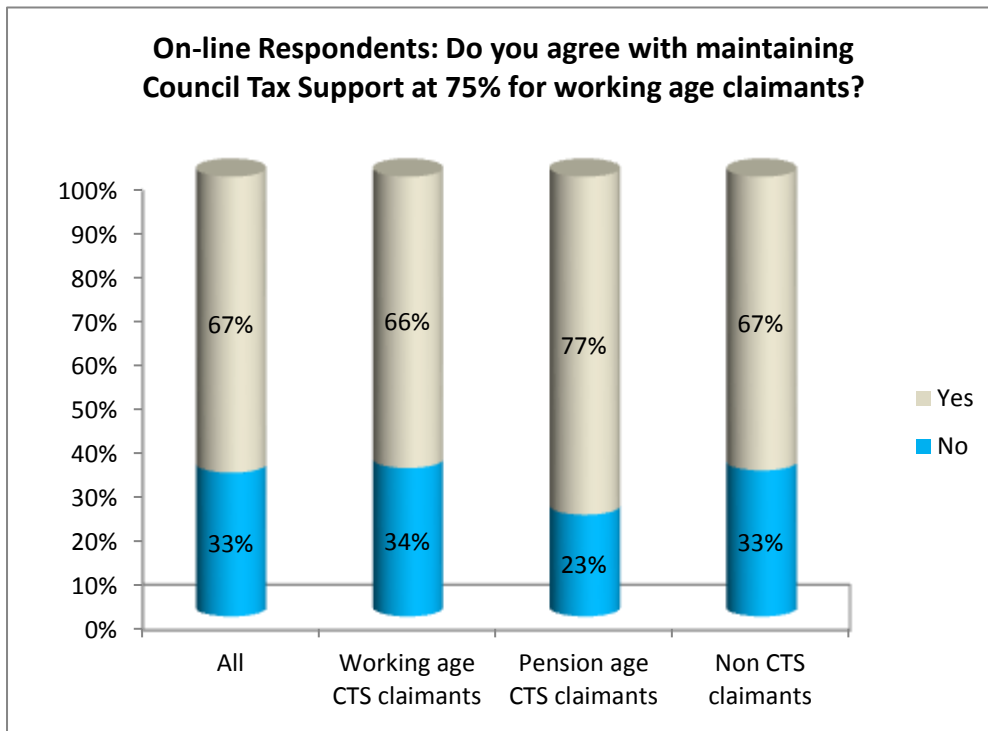


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of the postal responses received, overall 70% were in favour of retaining the level of support at a maximum of 75%. Again the result was irrespective of whether they were in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or not.



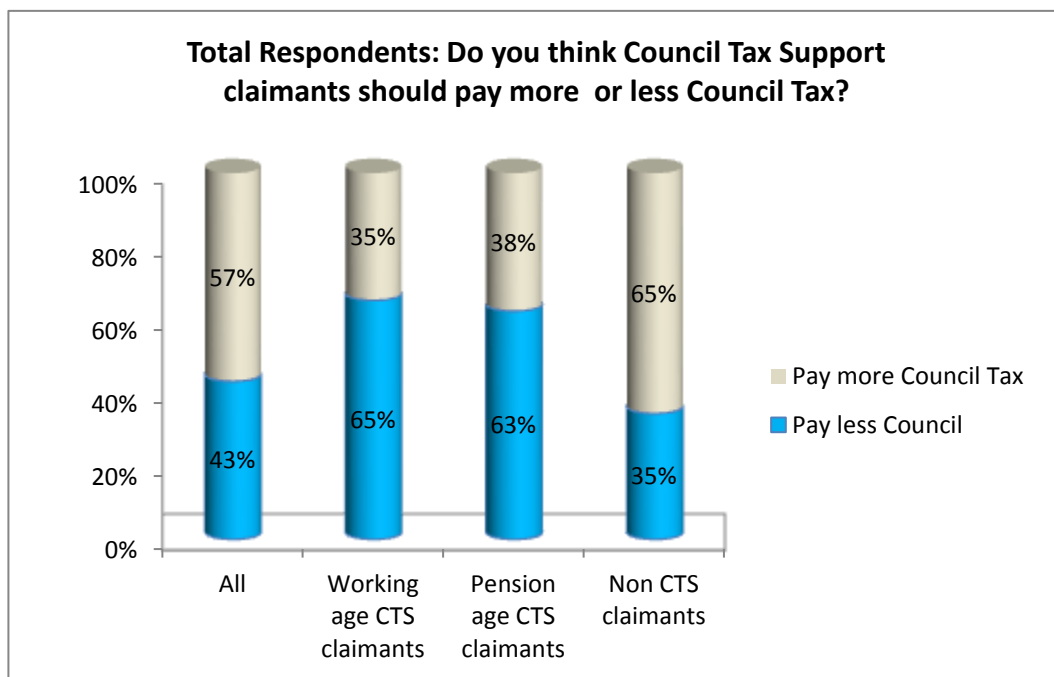
A similar situation was recorded with those who completed the survey on-line despite significantly higher numbers of respondents confirming that they were not in fact in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.



Question 1b.

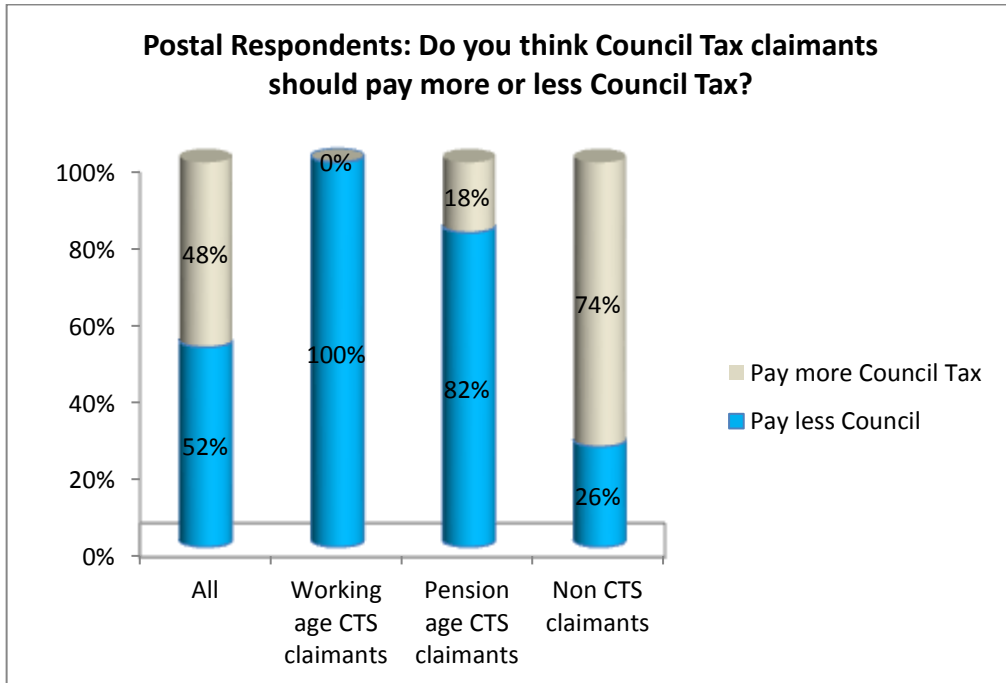
Overall response.

Of those who responded to state that they believe assistance should not be maintained at 75%, the *overall* outcome was that they wished to decrease the level of support thereby increasing the levels of Council Tax which recipients would need to pay.

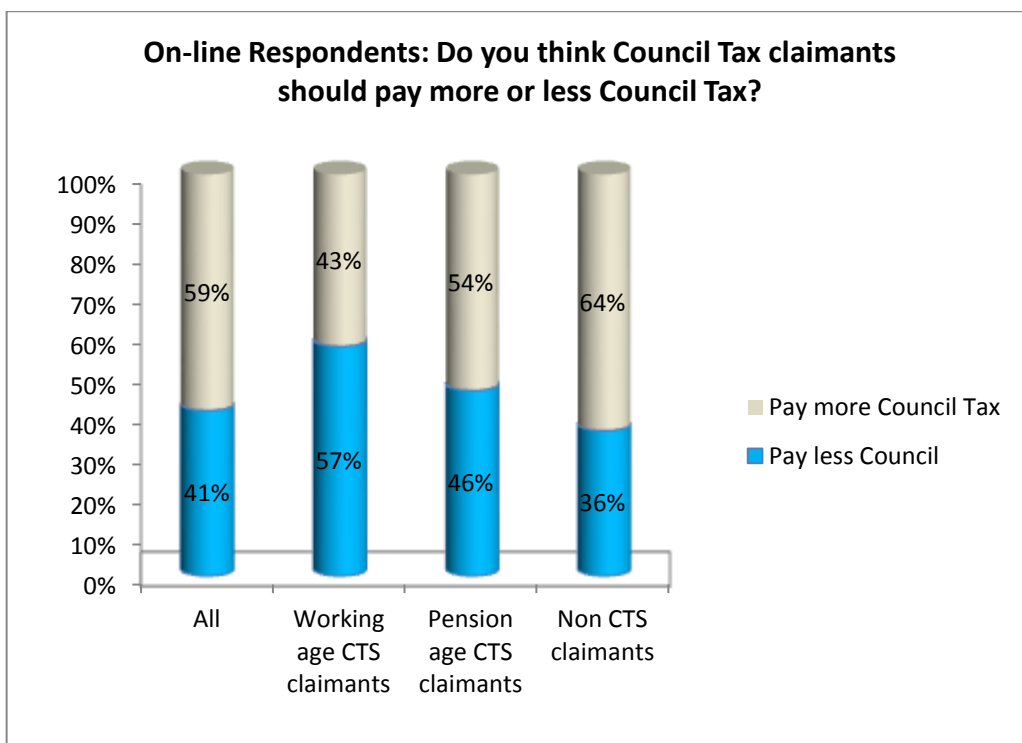


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of the postal responses received, overall 52% were in favour of Council Tax Reduction claimants receiving more support and paying less Council Tax. However, this was not supported by the majority of respondents not currently in receipt of support.



Of the on-line responses received, overall 59% were in favour of Council Tax Reduction claimants receiving less support and paying more Council Tax.



Question 2.

Q2 If you think that Council should increase the level of assistance for working-age people from 75%, how do you think this should be funded? In particular, should the Council increase Council Tax or cut other Council services or use the Council reserves, or all three?

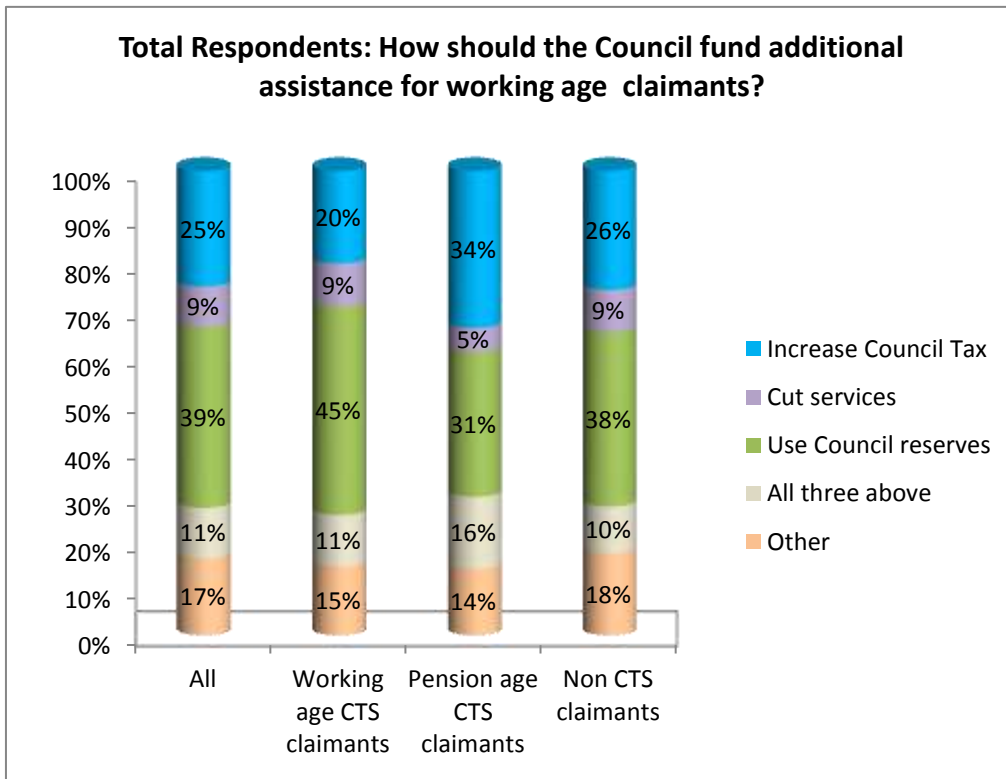
Please choose any of these that apply:

- a. Increase Council Tax
- b. Cut services
- c. Use Council reserves
- d. All three above
- e. Other

If you think services should be cut or have another suggestion, please write your answer here:

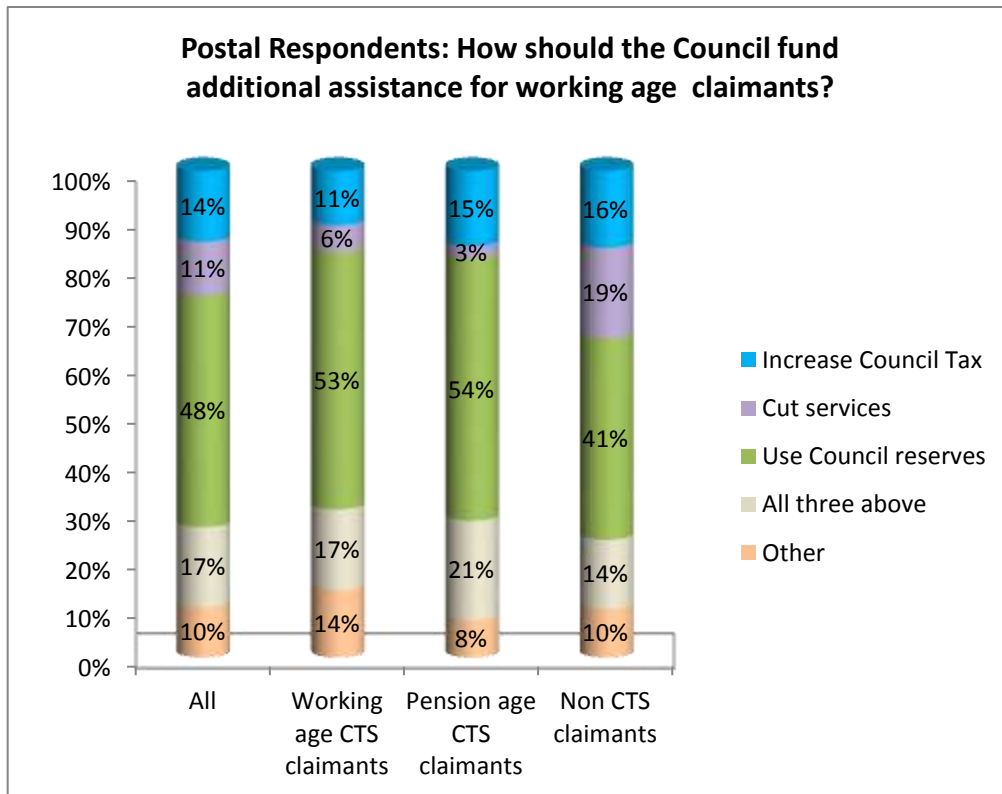
Overall response

The overall response to this question was that the Council should use its reserves to fund any additional contribution to the Council Tax Reduction scheme with 39% stating this to be their preference. The next highest preference at 25% was to increase Council Tax; this was the view of both Council Tax claimants and non-claimants.

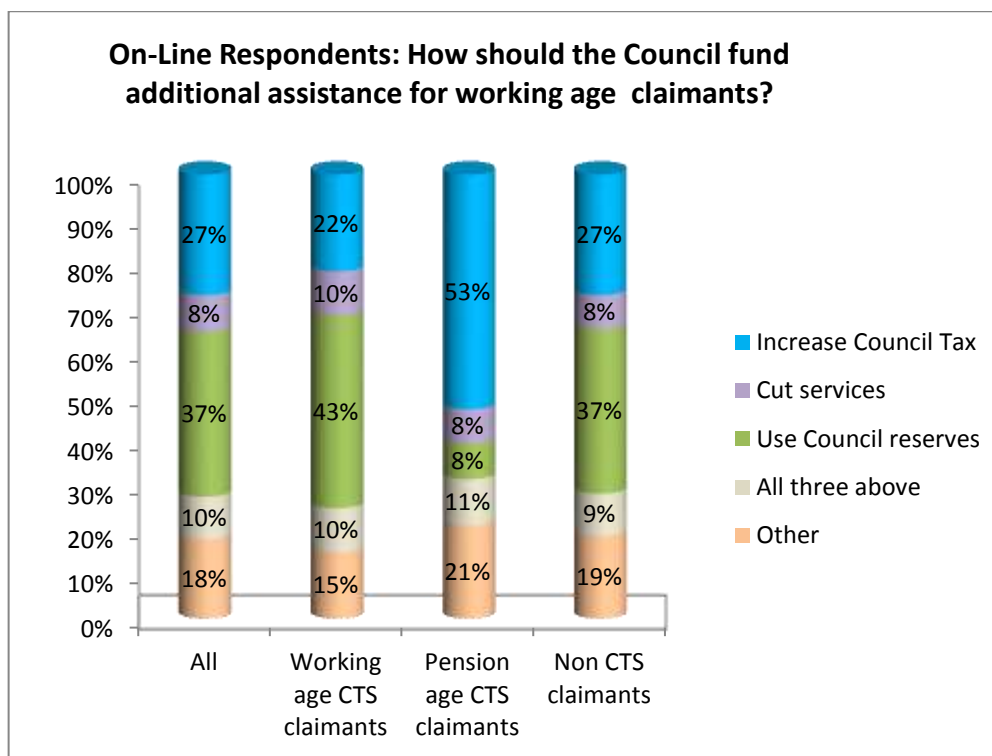


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of those who completed the postal survey, 48% confirmed the use of Council’s reserves to be their preferred option with the higher percentages from those receiving Council Tax Reduction.



Of those who completed the on-line survey 37% confirmed this to be their preferred option with the highest percentage of respondents choosing this option being those of working age who are currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.



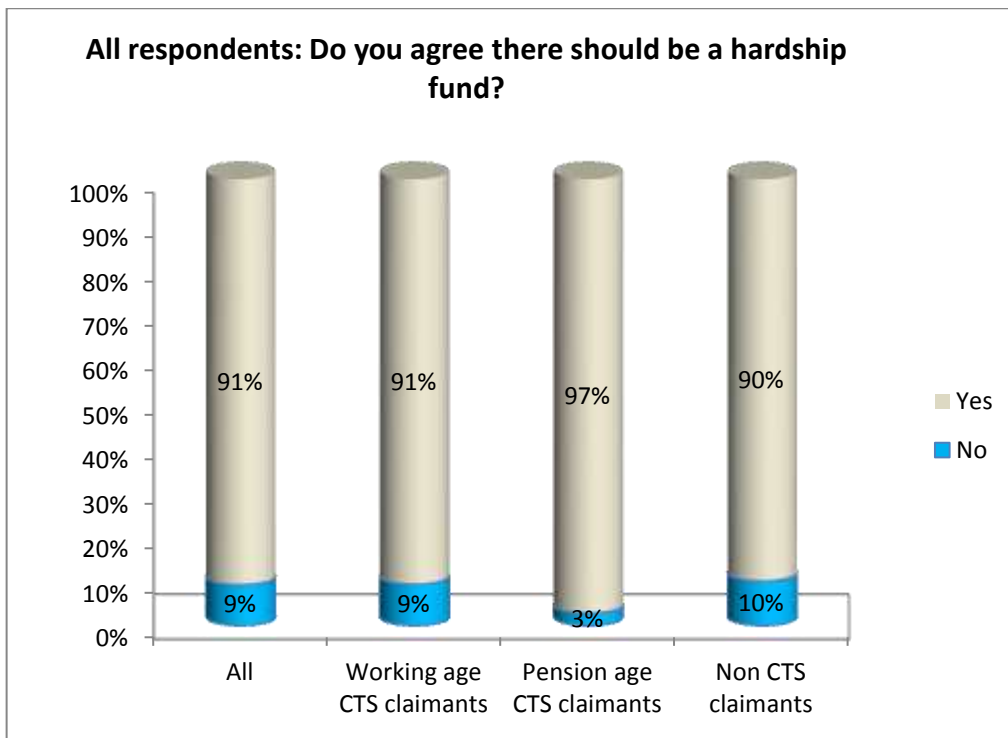
Question 3.

Q3 The Council has a hardship fund of £100,000 to protect the most vulnerable. This is to provide extra help to residents who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship and are unable to pay their Council Tax.

	Yes	No
a. Do you agree that there should be a hardship fund?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Do you agree the level of funding at £100,000 is correct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you disagree please write your answer here:		
.....		

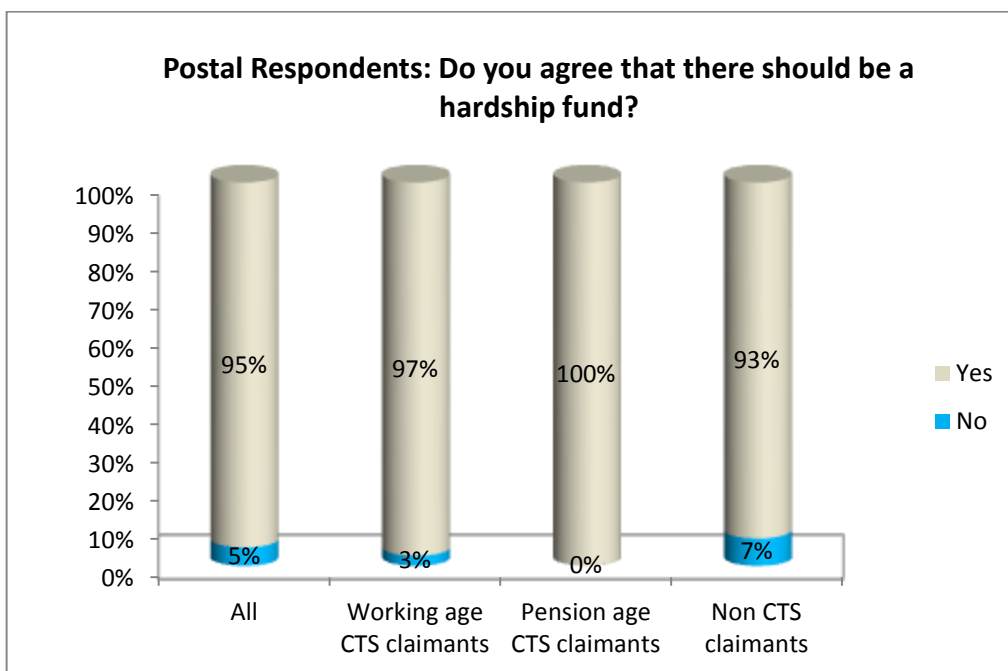
Overall response – part a.

The overall response to part (a) of this question was that, yes, the Council should have a hardship fund with 91% agreeing with this statement.

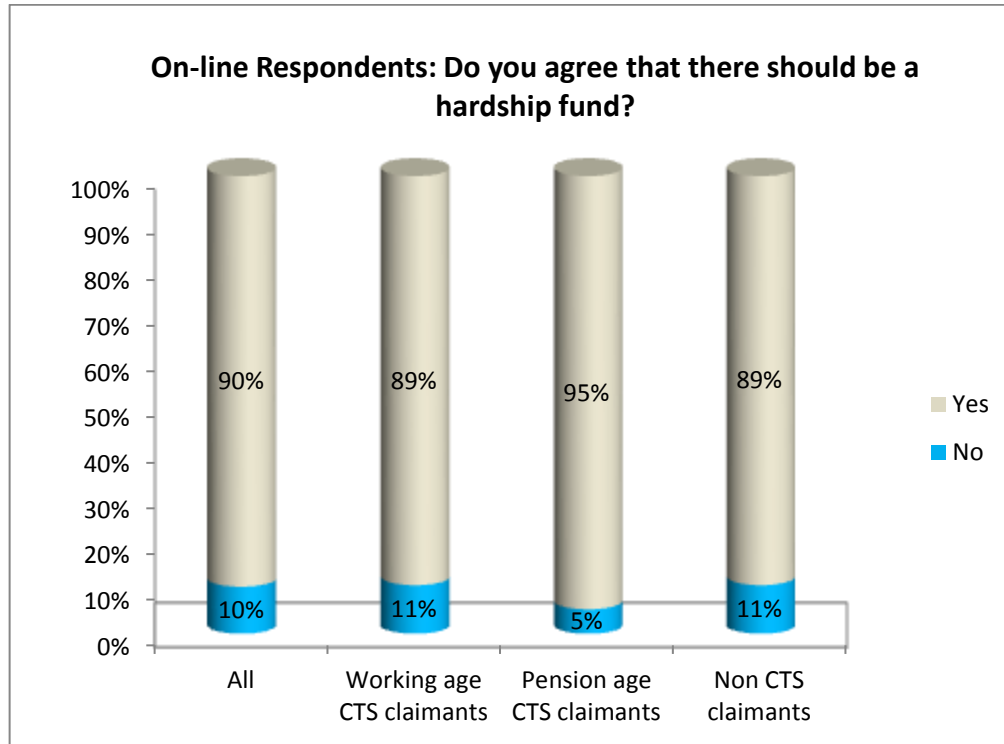


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of those who completed the postal survey 95% confirmed that there should be a hardship fund with a 100% of those in receipt of CTR who were pension age agreeing with this statement.



Of those who completed the on-line survey 90% confirmed that there should be a hardship fund with a continued high support at 95% of those at Pensionable Age in receipt of CTR agreeing with this statement. Interestingly, only 89% of those in receipt of CTR who were of working age and therefore most likely to benefit from a hardship fund agreed with the statement, this was a decrease of 4% from this group when the same question was asked last year.



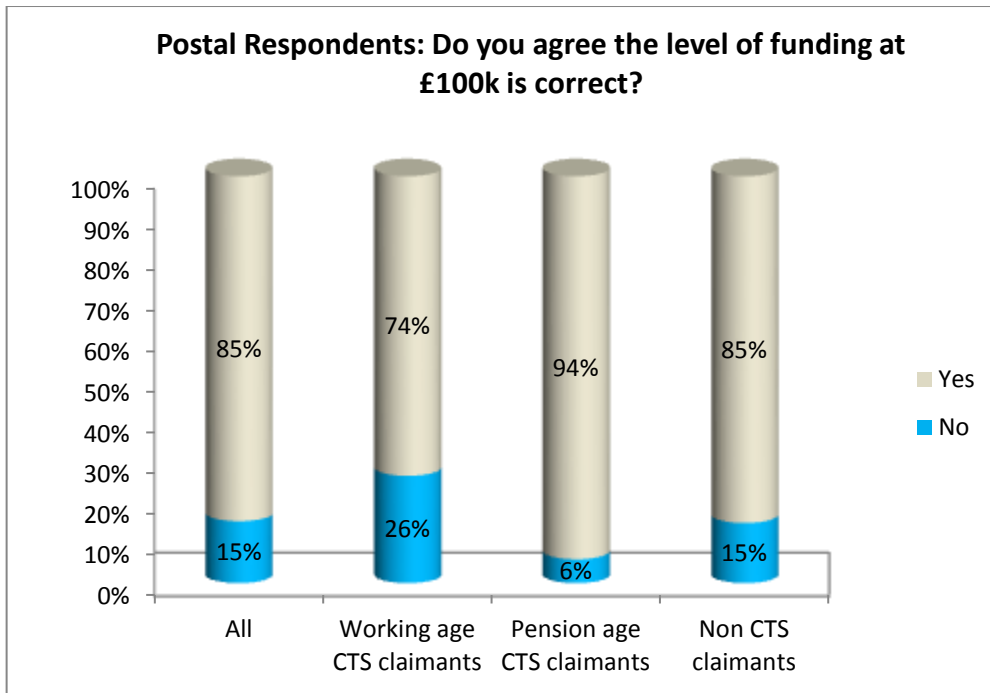
Overall response – part b.

The overall response to part (b) of this question was that, yes, the level of £100,000 for a hardship funding was correct with 67% agreeing with this statement.

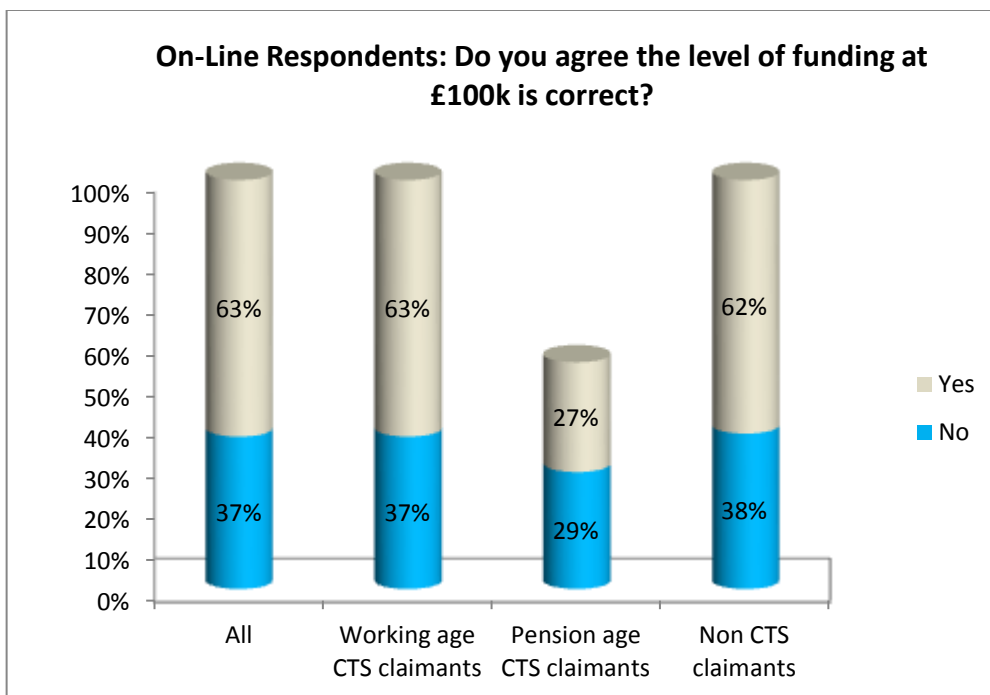
Of those who provided further commentary 38% believed that the sum should be increased and 16% that it should be decreased. Many of the other respondents felt that they were unable to comment without any further facts and figures being provided regarding the potential spend, numbers affected and the criteria qualifying for this fund.

Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of those who completed the postal survey 85% confirmed that the sum of £100,000 was correct.



Of those who completed the on line survey only 63% confirmed that the sum of £100,000 in respect of a hardship fund was correct.



Question 4.

Q4 The following amendments are proposed in order to align the Council Tax Support Scheme with changes made to Housing Benefit rules.

	Yes	No
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a. Currently, customers who leave Great Britain temporarily may still get Council Tax Support for 13 weeks or, in some cases, 52 weeks.

Do you agree that this should be reduced to 4 weeks ordinarily?

In exceptional cases this could be 8 or 26 weeks.

b. Do you agree that Council Tax Support should only cover the costs of 2 children in families rather than unlimited numbers of children? Exceptions would apply where Tax Credits are paid for more than 2 children.

	Yes	No
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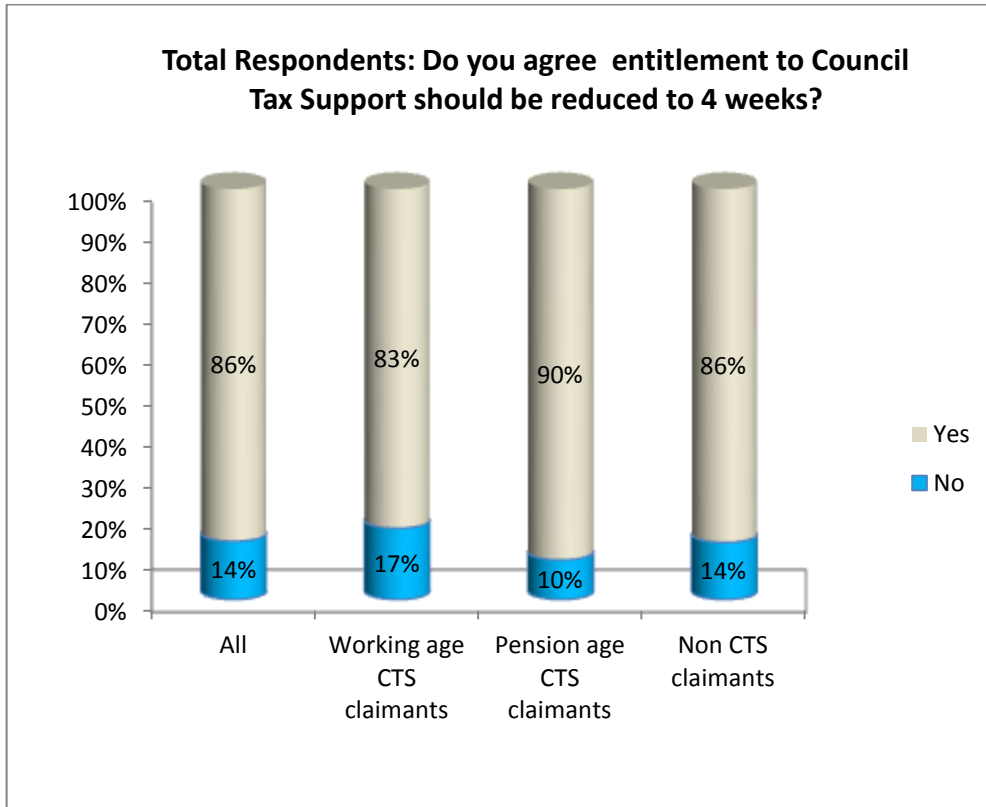
c. Do you agree that customers in receipt of Employment Support Allowance should only receive additional assistance if they are in the Support Group?

If you disagree please write your answer here:

.....

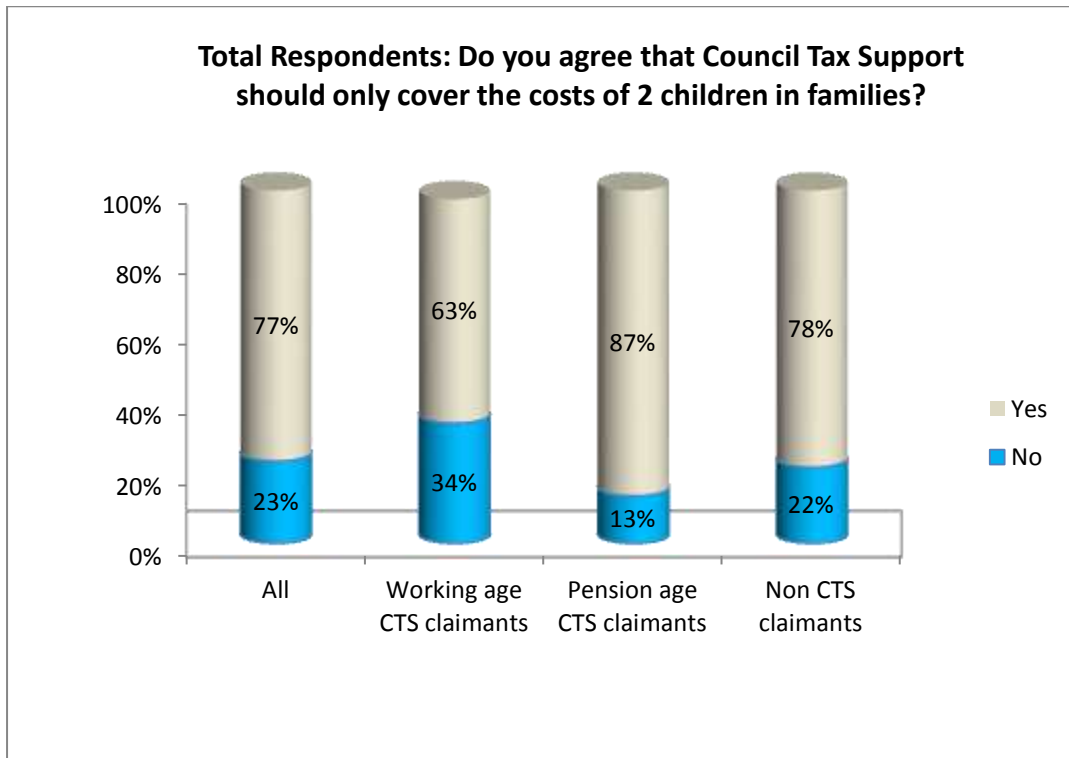
Overall response – part a.

The overall response to part (a) of this question was 86% agreed that claimants who leave Great Britain temporarily that their entitlement to Council Tax Support should be reduced to 4 weeks. Of those who completed the postal survey 87% were in agreement that the entitlement should be limited to 4 weeks and of the on-line responses received, 85% were agreeing to the same reduction.



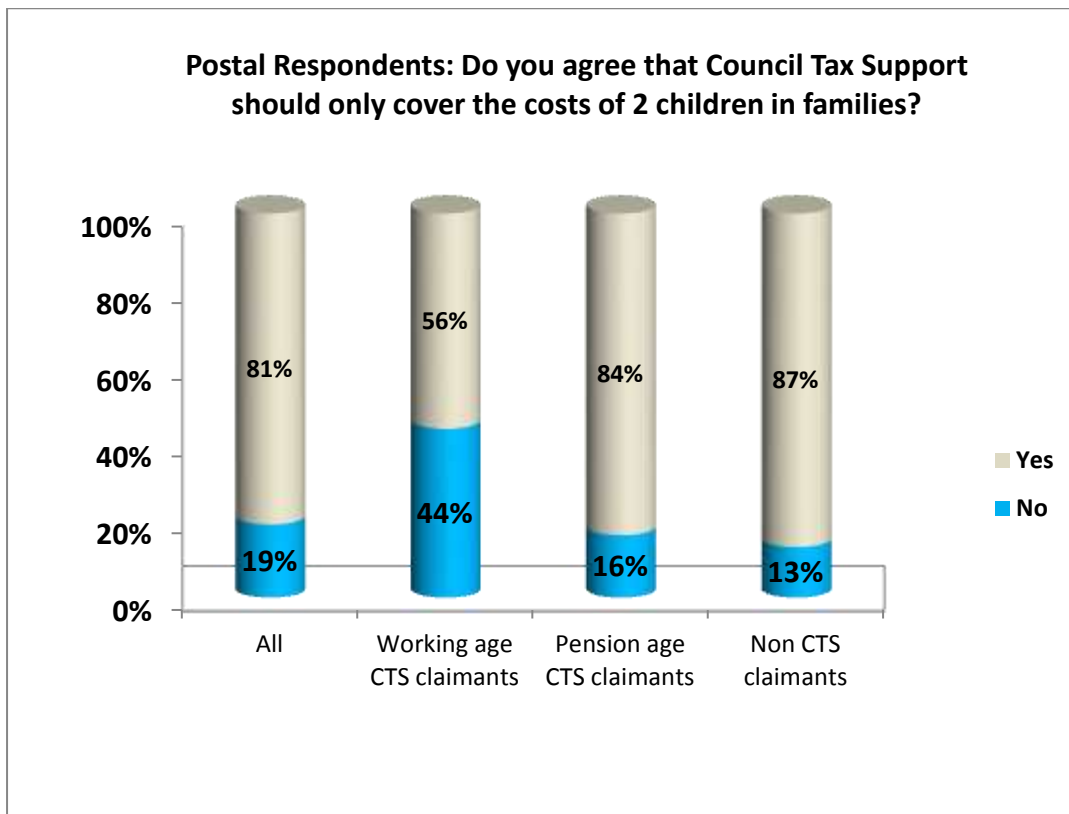
Overall response – part b.

The overall response to part (b) of this question was 77% agreed to a two child limit for personal allowance for claimants with dependent children. This means households with more than 2 children, each additional child's allowance will not be deducted from the household's income in assessing eligibility for Council Tax Support. These households would therefore be receiving less support and paying more Council Tax.

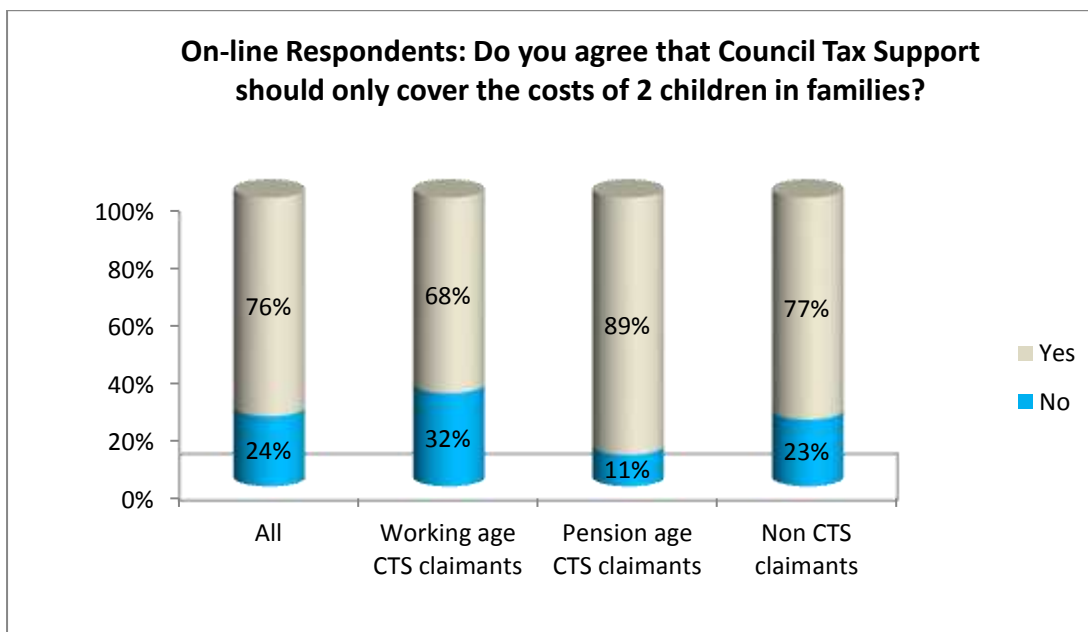


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of the postal responses received, overall 81% were in favour of Council Tax Support should be limited to cover the costs of 2 children in families, however the group that would most likely be affected by this change, Working Age claimants, only 56% supported this limit.



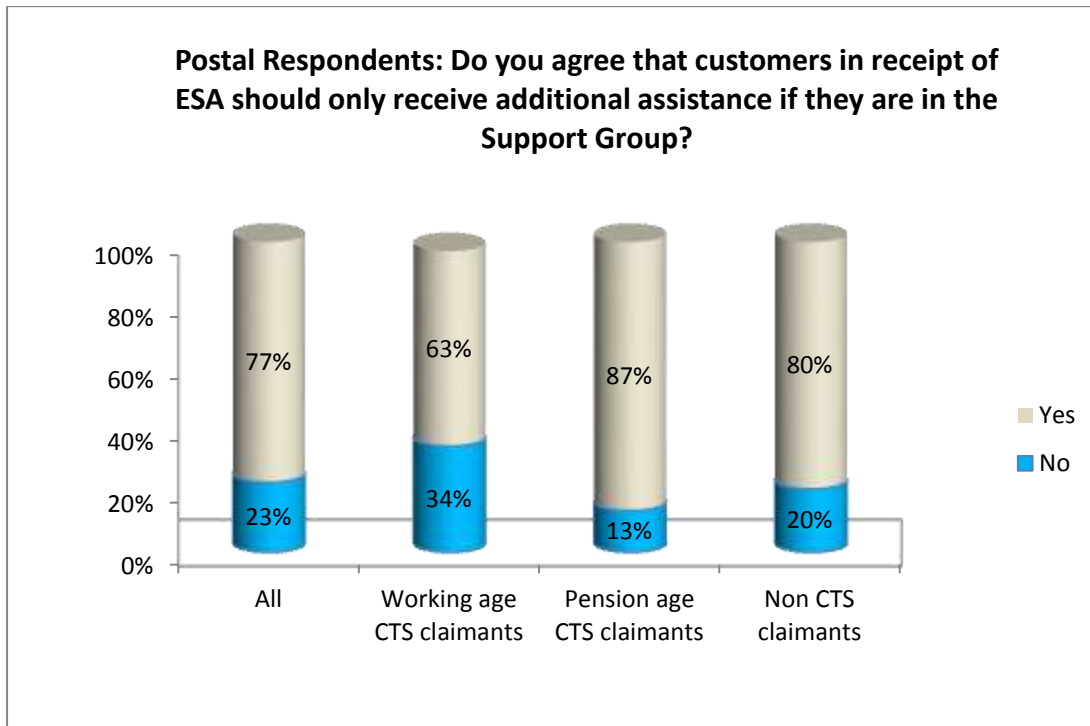
Of the on-line responses received, overall 76% were in favour of only covering the costs of 2 children in families. Again the least support received for this restriction was from Working Age respondents in receipt of Council Tax Support.



Overall response – part c.

The overall response to part (c) of this question, was, yes, claimants on Employment Support Allowance (ESA) should receive additional support if they are in the Support

Group with 77% agreeing to this statement. Of those who provided further commentary, a number of respondents felt they were unable to answer the question, as they do not know enough about ESA or the requirements to be in a Support Group.



Question 5 provided the respondents with the opportunity to raise anything else which they believed should alter in respect of the CTR scheme.

Q5 Are there any other changes you would like to see to the Council Tax Support scheme 2018/19 or any further comments you would like to make regarding the scheme?

Please write your answer here:

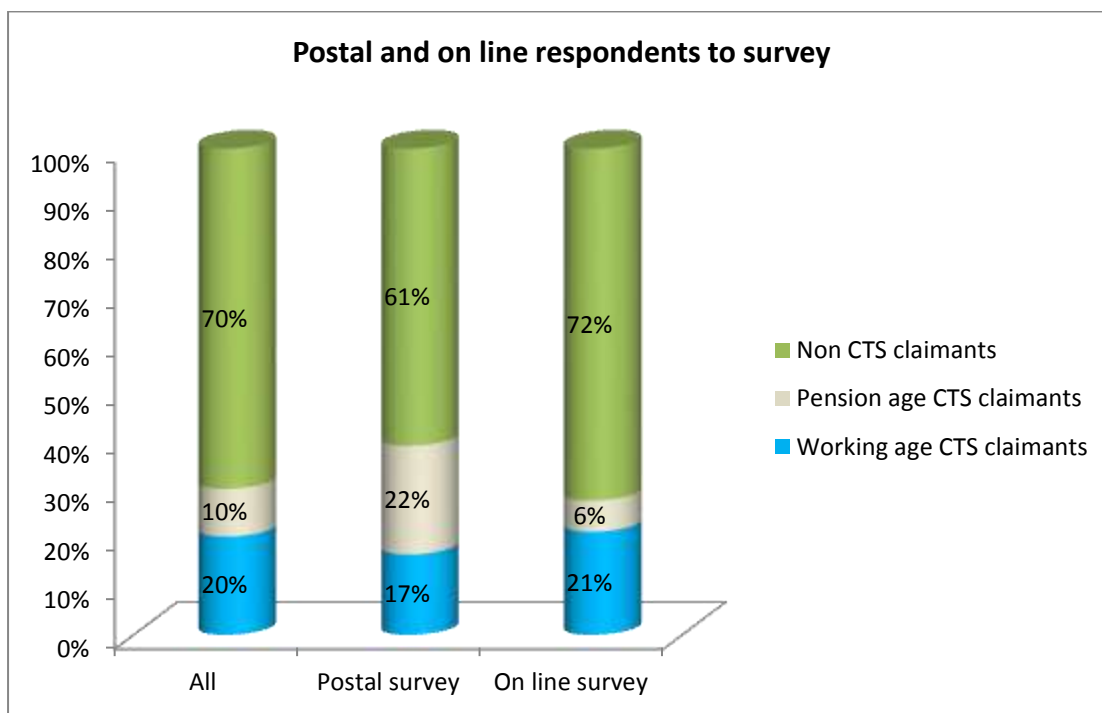
Where respondents did suggest changes, responses here fell into a number of broad categories with many suggesting the following:

- Undertaking better checks into those receiving CTR
- Increased protection for certain categories of people such as the disabled or single parents
- Employing a sliding scale of assistance
- Limiting the support further e.g. to those living in the lowest CTAX band
- Helping citizens to help themselves through employment opportunities

Q6	Please choose any of these that apply:	Yes	No
a.	Are you currently in receipt of Council Tax Support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If you answered yes to (6a) please tick one of the following:		
bi.	Are you a pensioner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bii.	Are you of working age?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall response

Of those who completed the survey, overall 70% were from respondents not in receipt of Council Tax assistance, and 30% confirmed they were either pension age or working age currently receiving Council Tax Support.



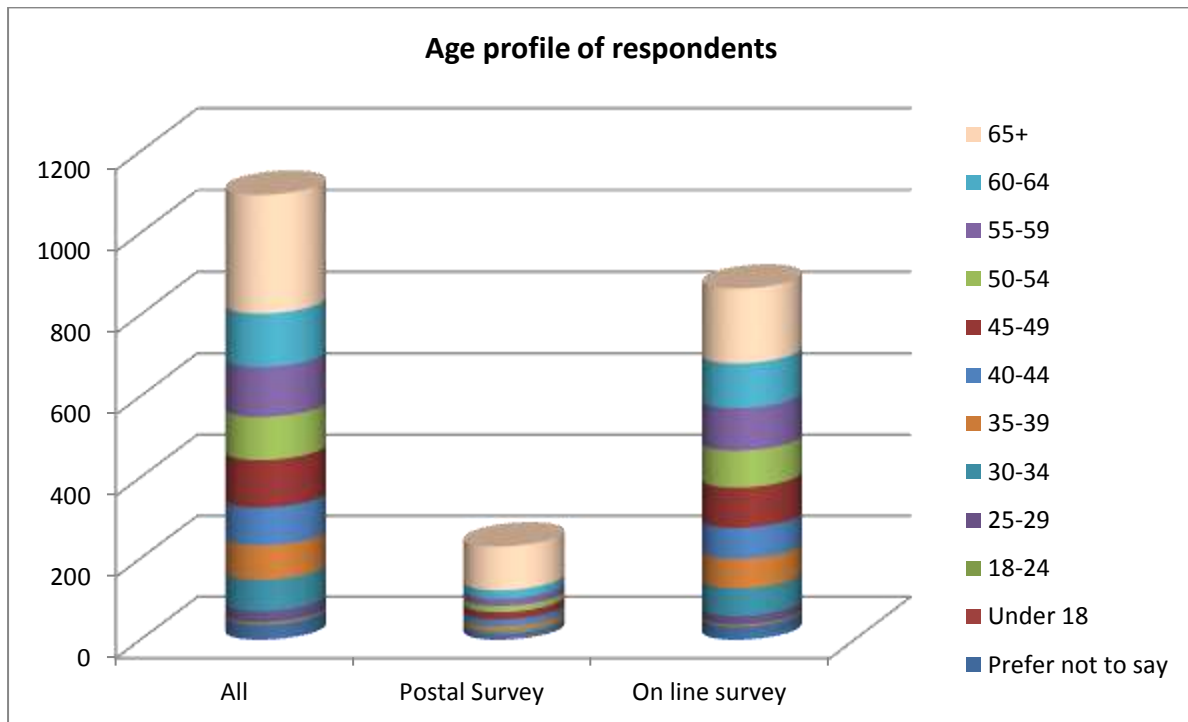
Details of all the narrative responses, to this question and others, have been included at Appendix 1.

Equality and Diversity.

Standard questions relating to Equality and Diversity were included on the survey but it was made clear that answering these was not compulsory.

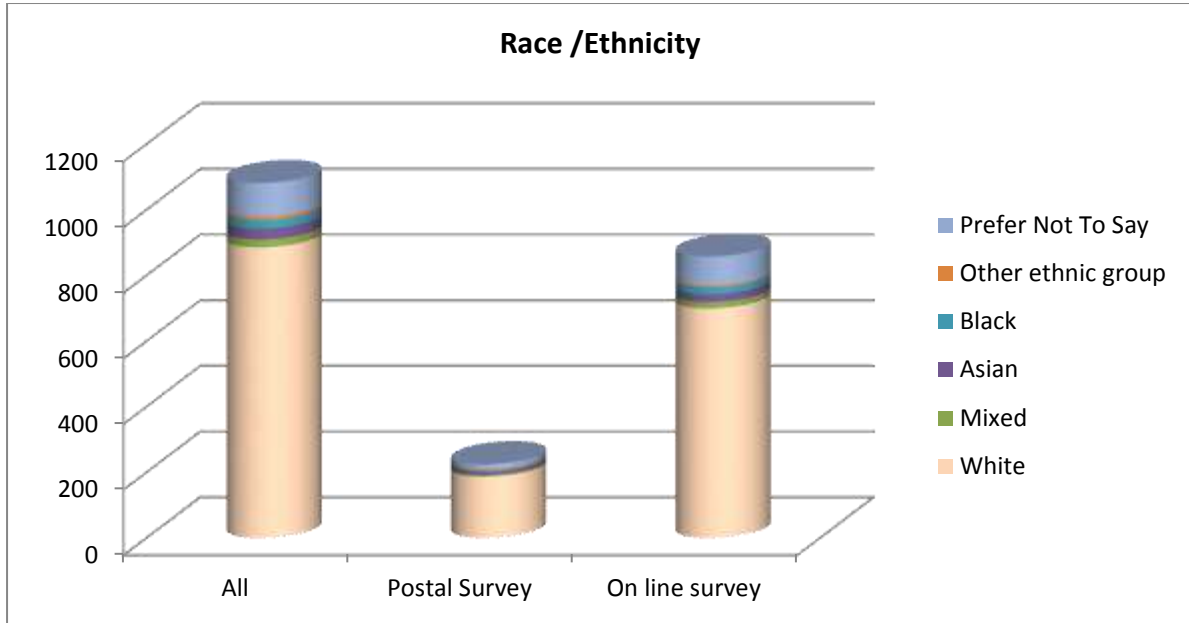
While 1,125 responses were received, not all respondents chose to complete the questions regarding their circumstances or ethnic background.

Overall, 1,094 people confirmed their age with the highest volumes of respondents being from those aged over 65 years of age, irrespective of whether the survey was completed on-line or by post.



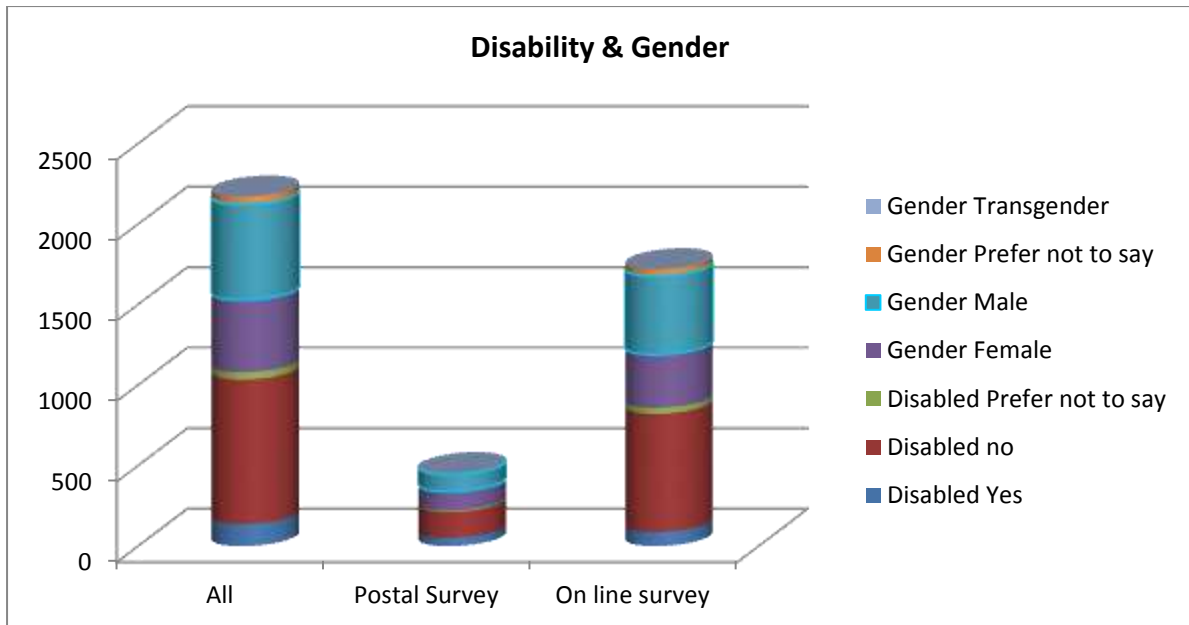
Ethnic Background.

1,081 respondents confirmed their ethnic background with the majority of respondents, 82%, stating that they were from a white background.



Disability and Gender.

1,080 respondents were happy to confirm whether they were disabled or not. 1,091 confirmed their gender of which 43% were female and 57% were male respondents. The analysis is shown below.



9. Timetable for Implementation

The new scheme will commence on 1st April 2018 for one year.

10. Appendix 1 – Narrative responses.

While narrative responses have been reproduced here for completeness, those respondents who simply stated “yes”, “no” or “don’t know” have been removed as these have been included in the analysis undertaken of the results above.

Q1 If you disagree with maintaining assistance for working-age claimants at 75%, please state why:

- a little more contribution from all residents will raise more money to continue providing services
- everyone else pays tax
- I believe they should be made to contribute more.
- Everyone in the borough has a responsibility to pay for the upkeep and contribute to the services received.
- Everyone would have to pay more so I think more help and support may be needed.
- If you are of working age and fit/health, you should find a job and contribute accordingly.
- The rate should be reduced to 2/3rds, this would allow the council extra income without the need to raise the general level of council tax.
- Inflation is up, all prices are going up. People are being more squeezed, especially families. It's stupid that the poor are having to bear the burden of Government meanness and incompetence.
- Because as a consumer of council services they should be expected to make a contribution more akin to the services they use. 25% should be the maximum support offered.
- Hardship for working age customers continue to increase (as does the burden on those of working age, with continued welfare cuts and subsidies for those on non-working age) Savings should be made in order to compensate and address this inequality.
- Requiring people on low income to pay any tax is wrong in my view
- If you are of working age you should get a job so you can pay your council taxes.
- What is the logic of this? If someone is deemed not able to pay their council tax how do you come to the conclusion that they are fit to pay 25%? So a fully disabled person, with no income, who happens to be "of working age", is still expected to pay 25% council tax, despite that money probably having come from the Council or government itself to support them? Seems cruel, arbitrary, short sighted, and bureaucratic in the worst way.
- Working age claimants should pay more - 50%

- It encourages fecklessness and discourages local & self responsibility.
- If you're unemployed, where do you get the 25% from?
- Everybody should have the same responsibility to pay for local utilities.
- Council tax should be equally distributed and paid by all residents since they all enjoy the same level of benefits.
- Working age people should work and pay their own council tax. Why should they live in a property they can't afford and then have me pay their bill? If they are disabled, they receive separate government assistance.
- People on low incomes are struggling with high rents and low wages. The rest of us could pay a little more to increase the subsidy to the poorest residents, so that they have more money left to build a stable future.
- still too many avenues for abuse
- Those worse off need more support from those in society. Wealth in the U.K. is polarised. Meaning more support is needed to the worse off
- Assistance should be temporary and act as a safety net. If this lasts longer than necessary, it builds a dependency on others to step up to the plate instead of the benefit claimant. 75% support is excessive in the first place. If anything, support should be limited to the disabled and pensioners. Eventually council tax can be reduced to reduce the burden on everyone else.
- People should contribute to the services they receive
- "Working age" is too blunt a means of assessing need. For those who are unable to work (but nevertheless of working age), assessment by reference to age alone seems cruel.
- 1. I understand that benefit levels for those in greatest need do not include ANY provision calculated to paying council tax and are in fact minimum subsistence levels (or possibly below that). Such claimants may therefore have NO resources available from which to pay a contribution towards Council Tax. However I accept that the contribution principle makes sense so perhaps the minimum contribution should be around 5 to 10%.
2. Not all persons of "working age" are in fact able to work.
- Funding pressures may otherwise result in a need to raise council taxes or reduce services.
- Bromley residents who pay the full rate should not be subsidising at such a high rate. This should be dropped to 50% so that the council can free up budget for other pressing issues
- I do not think this level is currently sustainable and should increase even if slightly.
- I would like to see a reduced maximum assistance of 70 percent.
- 75 percent is a very high figure - 50% would be fairer

- A horribly complex and bureaucratic scheme. It should be scrapped as those in poverty get other financial assistance from the state. This scheme simply duplicates other benefits.
- Those in receipt of disability benefits, carers allowance or the like should be exempt from paying council tax.
- There should not be a fixed percentage. It should be on a scale depending on income
- Working age people who are not working get many benefits, I believe they should pay 50% of their Council Tax.
- Reduction in services and/or council tax increases is not fair on people who pay the full rate.
- Everyone in council should contribute
- Benefits are already high enough
- The current level of income support is already very low. To ask people to find council tax from this amount puts them under more pressure than ever. I agree that it should be means tested, but the very poorest should not be expected to contribute from an already low income
- It takes too much from the budget. They already receive huge subsidies in every other area of their lives, inevitably pay little tax so they shouldn't be given such a discount on council tax.
- Those on low incomes receive income support and other forms of financial support, rebates, etc.
75% is an extremely generous discount for people who are potentially home more often and as a consequence, benefit from the council's services further.
- because I am totally opposed the benefits system
- Because single adult occupiers still have to pay the say amount as married couples who have more salary coming in, so more contributions even if a little more may help all of us in the long run.
- Society has let people down by not making educational opportunities fair. We have to do everything we can to support people who need more help at certain times in their lives.
- I disagree because continuing the support at 75% does not create an incentive for people to get back into work or increase their working hours to be able to afford paying council tax. I believe the amount of assistance should be subject to a stepped reduction, say over 6 months, to allow the claimant time to get into work or increase their working hours.
- If you really do have nothing, 25% of nothing is impossible to find
- There's no reason why able-bodied men and women need any support in paying council tax. Everyone who wants to work, can find work. The only people that may need some support are pensioners and people with disabilities (true and not

imaginary).

- Those who rely on state benefits can't afford it.
- It is not the function of the council to provide financial support in addition to that provided by national government. All financial support should be means tested and paid through the Universal Credit benefits system.
- Should pay more
- It is a punitive tax on the poorest of society; introduce a Band J for those living in properties of £800,000 value or higher.
- It should not apply to people who are receiving disability or ESA support these people are finding life hard through no fault of their own. The first year it was £7 the next year it was frozen for council tax payers. But if you was receiving disability support it doubled to £14 disgraceful and now its £19 , shameful
- The councils do not have enough money to clean streets and provide enough policing. Let the 'poor' spend less on their own entertainment and pay their share for the community
- I don't think it is fair that the council should have to find 75% where people only have to find 25%. That's less funding for resources and more on benefits
- I believe the amount payable is too low
- I do not feel that those on no or low income are supported in such a way when they are already receiving other benefits
- Because low wage earners still pay full and cannot afford like myself
- There has been no wage rise and inflation is still affecting real time wages
- There is no indenture for people to work hard & pay for the services that they receive. Why should my hard earned money subsidies them
- Encourage work and employment for people who can work, not leeching.
- Everybody should pay their own way fully, managing their budgets (or handouts) more effectively to pay their own share
- I am aware of the effect of the reduction in CT support on people with mental health problems or other difficulties which may underlie their low income.
- This is unfair to those who are on middle incomes.
- Not all working age people have a job. If they don't, they shouldn't have to pay the 25%.
- Unfair on other Bromley residents who have to pay the full council tax
- If the main option to maintain this benefit is increasing council tax for the rest then I am not in favour. The tax as it stands now is already a significant amount. We don't need

to eliminate support but lowering it to more manageable levels is a better approach.

- Everyone has a responsibility to contribute
- The Amount of Council Tax payable should be according to income on a sliding scale For example if a residents income is such that even 25% would push them further into debt then we are not solving their underlying social and financial issues
- Everyone is getting the same level of service so should contribute at the same level. Low income people already get a reduced income tax - higher rate are therefore already contributing more to government services it's not fair council tax is treated in the same way
- The current national minimum wage of £7.50 an hour is below the level calculated by the Living Wage Foundation which is £8.45 nationally and £9.75 if you live in London. Therefore people on low incomes are living below the poverty line as it is and should not have to pay 25% of Council Tax which is going to plunge them further into poverty.
- As the Council tax increases annually, why can't the contribution of CTS claimants increase too (by a similar percentage)?
- I believe it should be reduced to encourage them to earn more money
- If they live in the Borough and use its services, then given all the other benefits that low income people receive, I think a higher level of contribution is warranted. Otherwise, more services will be cut that affects everyone. Council tax relief is NOT the right mechanism from helping low paid people. It unfairly penalizes others in the same Borough. General taxation relief and national benefits relief is the way to help low paid people.
- It is unfair to expect normal council taxpayers to subsidise able bodied individuals. The benefits system should be reduced not increased. Too many people are living off handouts - it is a public disgrace.
- All should pay a fair share 75% support should be reduced as this is not a fair share.
- I believe 75% is too high. I'd rather see that money applied in improving other council services.
- Most people abuse it anyway so if you raised it at least they would be contributing more.
- Someone already qualifying for any council tax support will have enough financial problems and be at the lowest levels financially in the borough. I don't see how in that situation they can be expected to also find money to pay 25% of their council tax bill.
- It is not fair that people not receiving support (but on a low or minimum wage) have to pay the high council tax figures (which have of course just risen). 25% is far too low.
- Rate of inflation is higher than wage increases thereby reducing disposable income. Taxation should be reduced to compensate. Those subsisting at Income Support levels of income should not be required to contribute at all.
- Working age claimants who are able to work should not be subsidised as much.

- This is a tax on poor people - of which I am NOT one. So the lower it is the fairer, and I will happily pay more tax myself to make up for any losses to council revenue.
- 25% seems a little too high, and I would suggest increasing from 75% to 80%. However, I do not know what the total cost of this concession would mean, and without that information, it is a somewhat meaningless question & answer!
- It's a drain on resources,
- I think assistance should be maintained at 80%. I think this is a much fairer amount for people who are earning the minimum wage or less.
- Because most spend their support income on drink and drugs
- I don't believe such support should have a general floor or a ceiling (cap). A much better way of handling this would be to remove all limits and decide based on individual circumstances. This will mean some recipients will receive less and some more. I had to pick one option, but the answer to the question above is really "potentially both, based on individual circumstances).
- They should pay more to benefit from the services the council provides as I pay all my council tax without any assistance.
- I think that 50% is more than generous.
- People on a minimum wage or those unable to work because of illness who do not receive sick pay and have to rely on Income related ESA would find this difficult, if not impossible, to pay. There are enough well off people in the borough to subsidise them.
- I cannot see why the support for working-age people appears to be lower than that for pensioners in comparable situations. This does not seem fair.
- Times are very hard for people on low incomes. I stress that I am not talking about unemployed people, but those on low incomes. We have a good number of wealthy residents in our Borough and I personally wouldn't object to paying a little extra if it means that it will help people who are struggling on low incomes (not benefits).
- Should pay more than 25%!
- Anyone who requires support should make up the difference with community work projects like keeping the borough clean & graffiti free
- As the assistance is means tested it is inequitable for there to be a pre-assessed minimum amount to be paid.
- People on very low incomes or disabled people shouldn't have to pay anything
- Most claimants income will not have increased. therefore, this will represent a real decline in income.
- The rest of us have to pay for their support
- As a bi lateral amputee living along in a housing association flat every penny counts. I had to drop the emergency alarm that I had to cope with the council tax. I have issues

with the discretionary housing payment and how long it takes to get a response. I worry about getting behind so spend money that could be better used to improve my diet.

- Too many people relying on benefits
- I feel that at the current rate, it's unsustainable for some resident's on low income to maintain the level of liability left over after CTS has been deducted. Carrying on at the current rate or more will only lead to further debt, and cost to the Council.
- Despite periods of unemployment and financial difficulties I have never claimed benefits of any sort, having been brought up to meet my commitments. I don't believe that council tax payers should have to support others who choose not to meet their responsibilities. We already pay towards benefits through income tax and national insurance
- I think people receiving benefits should pay more for their services. Many of these people are far better off than they claim.
- 75 to generous figures should be reversed
- The percentage is too high, 50% or less should suffice.
- All costs are rising and the amount of assistance should decrease slightly to reflect increase spending equitably
- Not everyone lives in Bromley area earns 40k a year I disagree with this it should be more than 75 percent
- People requiring Council Tax Support are generally struggling to make ends meet and it is well known that shortfalls in Council Tax Support are putting people into greater debt, often leading to eviction and even higher costs to the public purse.
- Costs of utilities food and clothing are rising and these affect people on low incomes more than they affect others. I think the support should be increased.
- Council tax in Bromley is quite high already relative to other boroughs. Increasing payers' contributions further in order to fund CTS support would place undue burden on these residents, and make Bromley council tax even more expensive. Since council tax that residents pays goes towards basic services, like refuse collection, roads, etc, which are used by everyone, it makes sense that people contribute something towards this. Slightly less support for CTS claimants does not increase the burden on them significantly, and would be a smaller burden than the increase on other residents.
- If you're working age you should be working - and paying council tax like the rest of us
- I think there should be assistance for retired pensioners. And that they should pay a lesser amount.
- The council can't afford it.
- Why not?
- There are too many people who are on benefits and cheating. I would suggest having more control/ checking those claimants. I don't think it is fair for us to pay their

expensive lifestyles.

- As someone who works 6 days a week and pays full council tax, I disagree with raising my tax bill to support those of working age. I am committed to social care but there must be a balance struck between penalising the working class and social support.
- If incomes are insufficient this is a matter for central government. In fact council tax should be abolished and funds central taxation and distributed by government to councils who should be relieved of social care, health, fire, police and education.
- The council tax bandings need to be relooked at, as house prices have changed. Council tax in Bromley is far too high & residents do not receive value for money. Working people struggle to pay council tax as rates are too high. More support needed for working people is needed.
- People should pay their own way and take individual responsibility
- If they can't afford to pay it, they can't afford to pay it. Asking for a contribution from someone on benefits (which are calculated as being just what they require to meet their basic needs) defeats the point.
- The money could be directed elsewhere specifically to social care for the elderly.
- Adults in employment should not expect other tax payers to help them financially. Employers should pay a living wage.
- I think individuals should pay more towards the reduced amount they pay on council tax.
- There should be an option for the least well off or most in need to receive 100% relief
- You are pushing the poor into debt they cannot afford
- Even 25% will be too much for some people. Vet them carefully and thoroughly, but I would suggest 90% feels right for the hardest cases
- Council needs more money for essential services
- Should be 50%
- As someone who is now retired, but not yet at state pension age for another 5 years, my income is borderline, as I only receive income from an occupational pension. The cost of my council tax at 100% liability is a huge expense to me, and makes a significant difference to what I have left out of my residual income. I therefore would like to see my council tax cost decrease, by reducing the level of support for others. I feel I have subsidised others for far too long now, and as one who is now on a borderline income, I feel it is only fair that people like myself no longer have to subsidise others any longer. Reducing my council tax cost will help me manage my financial commitments a lot better.
- Too high a burden on those who can least afford it.
- Some people on benefits and very low wages are being seriously forced into poverty and debt. In some cases the level of support should be 100% but for other more well-off people less support should be offered. The system should be tailored to ensure that

people are not forced into debt or poverty. Bromley is a very rich borough and richer residents like me can afford to pay more.

- I feel a support of two thirds rather than three quarters is more appropriate
- There are plenty of jobs that the claimant could do
- people working on low wages should get a lot more help, it's not like there sitting at home doing nothing
- I am a pensioner I pay the full amount out of my state pension so why when someone is working should they get it at a reduced amount
- There are those who cannot afford to pay even 25%.
- Far too generous - they would pay if they were made to.
- If people are working they should pay full liability
- The amount that I am paying in Council Tax does not reflect the service that we are getting where I live. E.g.: the pavement are not clean, litter everywhere, etc. Compared to order areas in Bromley. I live in SE20.
- Too open to abuse
- Support should be means tested and time limited.
- 50% assistance is more than generous.
- Support should be gradually decreased over time
- I fear that paying 25% may be too onerous for some, and would be prepared to pay more to keep this to 20%.
- It should be graded between. 0 and 100
- 25% is still a significant amount of money, with continued high levels of inflation, transport and rent costs this may be difficult for poorer citizens.
- When people require council tax support they are desperate.
- Many residents in Bromley make the decision not to try to support themselves therefore why should resident who do support them
- May encourage people on benefits to seek paid employment
- If they are working they should contribute more
- People claiming benefit should be exempt.
- Because you have cut services and this could go back into services. Why should those of us that work hard and pay full council tax support people that don't?
- They get the same support as everyone else, so they should pay the same

- I do not agree that people cannot find a sum of money to support local services which they enjoy
- Some people are on low wages but still can't afford payments. Those people (working) need more help
- I think residents who are above working age but who own their own home should receive less support, rather than working age people who claim Council Tax Support.
- I'd like to see those who can't work get more help
- There are now better minimum wages/ living wages being earned. Everyone is now feeling the pinch due to government cut backs to reduce the national debt. If more support is handed out the remainder of council tax contributors would be paying even more.
- Benefits do not cover the extra needed. Too many children are living in poverty, and many on benefits can't afford to pay the 25%
- In my view all residents benefit from the services provided by the council so they should be required to pay a fair amount towards the services. If required to pay a fair amount the council could provide a broader range of services to all residents.
- There should be flexibility to give more support to those in greater need.
- Put simply, we should not be taxing the poor. After the introduction of the benefit cap and bedroom tax, many of those receiving benefits simply do not have sufficient income to pay their council tax and are having to make the decision to eat, heat or pay this bill. Central government provides money which it says is the minimum you needed to survive, but, after the welfare reform, along comes local government and takes it away! The combined effect has pushed large numbers of people into debt. Should you have any doubt that what I am saying is not based in fact, The Children's Society recently documented the damage done to children living in families who are now experiencing the fallout from non-payment of council tax particularly as family debt escalates, bailiffs are summoned, and court costs are incurred; the charity found that eight out of 10 families interviewed responded to council tax debt by cutting back on food or heating.
- A lot of people cannot afford this. They should pay something 15% would be fairer
- I think there should be a time limit. Anyone can fall onto hard times but if this last more than 12 months they should sell their home
- Tax is already banded by value of home. Support should only be available for those in lowest band.
- Should pay for services used
- Should be more means tested.
- 75% is too bigger discount especially if keeping it at that could mean full council tax payers potentially having to pay more. It should be a maximum 50% discount
- I pay, therefore they pay. I agree with exceptional temporary measures to support

difficult times, but extended periods of support lead to dependency and entitlement.

- Austerity measures over the last 10 years have meant increased poverty for some of the working poor.
- Everyone has to pay their way. No reason why should be subsidised by others. They need to cut back on own personal expenditure eg cars, holidays, smoking, drinking and other nice to haves. Pay for essential services first.
- Claimants should contribute more to local services. Those same people are probably exempt from all other taxes.
- It discourages people on benefits to find work
- Taxes should be paid not dogged
- People who receive this benefit are living on or below the poverty line. As a community we should be supporting them further to ensure their resources are spent basic needs (food etc.).
- I'd love to have lower council tax but I probably wouldn't meet criteria. If people are paying less than others must be paying more to compensate in some way.
- It deeply frustrates me that elderly people in Bromley get so many benefits- pensioners who own their properties should start to pay more. They got to retire earlier, with better pension pots and have benefited from property. Plus they will use far more resources i.e. NHS
- Universal credit should provide all form of government support to low income workers - other schemes such as this confuse situation
- I would only support government support of council tax if the cumulative total of support is fully repaid when the homeowner or his/her heirs (in the event of death) sell the property. Repayment of tax support would take precedence over all other liens, including mortgages.
- Some residents with children will be struggling to make ends meet. What is the point of forcing a 25% contribution if they will have to sacrifice food, heating or clothing?
- The whole scheme should be overhauled, a more pay as you use solution, I don't use libraries, shut them down or charge for them, make them pay for themselves. Should also look to everyone to pay of working age, this should be collected through central government as part of a percentage of all working persons, the householder should only be liable for direct costs, such as refuse collection.
- As benefits have not increased for the last three / four years, more support should be given to assist them as they struggle to pay bills and eat and stay warm!
- Because I'm fed up of subsidising scroungers.
- If people cannot afford to pay 25% they will be forced to find the money by not eating properly, not heating their homes properly or not supporting their children. Having a blanket "they must pay at least 25%" takes no account of individual's personal circumstances, and is cruel and unnecessary.

- I see no reason why the amount of support that the Council and therefore the rest of us provide should not be reduced and therefore support claimants should pay more.
- No claimants with kids allowed (green tax)
- There are a lot of pensioners who struggle to pay the council tax since they may be assert rich but cash poor, as most of their money is tied up in the property that they live in.
- I do not want to see either an increase in council tax, or reduction in services provided because of an assistance scheme
- Liability should be fair for all Council Tax payers
- Lots of unemployed people have or have had mental health issues or are too useless to get a job. Pushing them into poverty and homelessness for some uninformed doctrinaire reason (and a randomly chosen figure) might "ethnically cleanse" a few of them out of the Borough, but others will just give up and start petty crime like shoplifting, which causes more expense in the long run.
The idea that Mike Ashley, Richard Branson & co need to be given financial incentives to make them earn more money, but someone with MH issues and no skills who owns nothing needs an extensive dose of poverty and more pain to transform them into a useful productive citizen tell us far more about the people taking the decision than about the real world; unless policy is to take the UK back to mediaeval society of plutocrats and casual subsistence jobs at eg Sports Direct or Amazon etc.
Why are we voting on this figure without any supporting evidence ?
- I am a pensioner and get a single person allowance why should someone who is working get 75% reduction. I worked for 41 years paying full tax and national health and got no help.
- Anyone of working age, unless they are severely disabled, can find work if they wish to. Too many people in this country claim benefits because they are lazy and it's the easy option. As long as they keep getting free handouts, they will continue to do this.
- I can't afford to subsidise other people when I'm struggling to get on the housing ladder...
- It's a hardship for everyone financially; I would be aggrieved at paying more council tax for others benefit
- times are hard, not fair for low earners to have to pay
- We are already paying increased council taxes everyone should therefore share the burden you have to live within your means
- low income households should receive maximum support
- Because wages and government financial support are falling behind in actual inflation and everyday living costs
- All people should pay their fair share of council tax. Decreasing the support will encourage lower paid people to gain qualifications and/or increase their pay by applying for better jobs.

- I think the maximum should be raised to help the poorest people in the borough.
- People on benefits can't afford to pay any council tax
- You are sitting on millions of £s of reserves, closing our libraries, cutting our services, building few if any council houses. Your SEN provision is laughable, including cutting assisted travel for disabled children. To ask people with very little to contribute more is reprehensible.
- Why should they get support when pensioners on a low income in similar circumstances get no help? Besides, this kind of benefit creates a dependency, which just leaves the rest of us paying more.
- Council Tax should be paid by all of us for essential services, which are now more important than subsidising individuals temporarily.
- Many jobs pay minimum salaries, we should help people who are struggling. I also think pensioners should pay more, as many have comfortable pensions and are doing better than working families. I'm a pensioner myself and would pay more council tax if it helped poor families.
- Think assistance should be 70% and they pay 30%
- What isn't stated is whether the 75% support is sufficient for people on low incomes? If means-testing is thorough and they are still struggling then it patently isn't enough. In which case we should increase Council Tax for everyone else to help those in need. If 75% is enough and they are coping, why would the Borough consider changing it?
- Cost of living and more people are working for a lower rate to maintain employment.
- Council should provide more assistance to those on low income and they shouldn't pay council tax at all
- Because it is a significant amount of support and whilst I agree that some support should be given to those who GENUINELY need it, the amount currently is too high
- I think that unless people in workable age genuinely need assistance (they have very small children, helping old people or face disability themselves or any such reason due to which they are unable to work), only then should the government provide assistance.
- As someone on disability benefits and unable to work I am struggling to pay the required council tax.
- The current council tax charge is very expensive and I do not receive any benefits from it currently
- Hopefully, this will push them harder to earn more money or control their expenses. This has worked in several other countries.
- People are living in poverty, the majority of which are due to no personal fault, and policies such as this are pushing people deeper into debt.
- This is an absurdly high level of assistance. People of working age without the means to pay their council tax could be paid by the council to provide basic services - e.g.

street sweeping, refuse collection from public bins, etc. They would then have an income with which to pay their bill. If the 75% is to be maintained then why not employ beneficiaries as just described? Then it would bring down the burden for those paying in full. It seems illogical to provide exemptions for some citizens without expecting them to contribute in some form (provided they have the means to contribute, of course).

- Grossly unfair that people who are disabled and virtually on the bread line with shrinking benefits are then expected to subsidise the richest in the borough, shameful!
- With the current cut backs the council needs all the monies that it can get and whether you are on a low income or not you still receive the same services and use the roads / pavements these should be fairly paid for by all.
- working age claimants should be responsible for paying council tax
- 75% is too high
- The alternatives suggested for funding support at 75% appear to tax claimants in different, stealthy, ways, so they lose out financially anyway e.g. increasing Council Tax in total, reducing services provided. This situation is being presented as people having a choice of paying less or paying more when in fact it is no choice, just paying for services in different ways instead of one up-front payment. Surely it is fairer to charge people the amount the Council requires for its services in one go rather than through various economies and charges here and there?
- The level of assistance should be reduced to 70% with claimants paying 30% as this cost is not sustainable with the cuts to LA funding and the need to protect frontline services and social care. A 5% increase to claimants is not substantial and if they are of working age in employment then they should contribute more to the services they receive from the Council as these increase year on year.
- These people are some of the poorest in our borough and should be supported more.
- Depends on reason for being on benefits. If serious medical condition limits ability to work I think this group of claimants should receive as much help as possible
- Need to encourage people to be self-sufficient.
- People in receipt of benefit and of working age are living on less than anyone can afford to live on and should not have to pay any Council Tax, as was the case before the cuts.
- A contribution of 80 percent plus, I
- If you are dependent on benefits, paying 25% of your council tax can be a huge burden on your budget. It's already means-tested, so people receiving support must be on extremely low income. How is it helpful to charge them part of their Council Tax when we should be working towards getting people out of poverty? And the wording at the start of this survey is an absolute disgrace! It reads like something from the daily mail, telling participants that if they want to see more help for those in poverty than they will get higher council tax bills or less services. Deliberately leading language like that must surely be illegal in a council survey?
- If people are on low incomes, when costs generally are rising, we have a responsibility

to support them where we can.

- I am a charity volunteer often helping people (reliant on benefits) in financial difficulties. This is sometimes caused by errors by Councils who stop e.g. housing benefits for erroneous reasons. In any event people deserving of state benefits need a certain amount to live on. To require them to contribute to Council Tax is a mistake. All that happens is they are prosecuted (at considerable expense to other people paying Council Tax) when they fall into debt for whatever reason. Far better is to reduce benefits by the same amount, and abolish the 25% charge leaving claimants with the same net amount. I appreciate this will adversely affect Council finances. But the system in my opinion is wrong with greater funding needed from central government.
- No other scheme offers such huge financial assistance at a cost to the local council who are having to continually make huge savings i.e. reducing staffing cost although the job still needs to be done and services provided by the council which are benefited by everyone living in the borough.
- I think it is too much to expect those on low incomes (unemployed etc) to pay 25% of their council tax
- The inflation in the country do not match with the salary or wages paid. And people spend more on food now than before.
- My Tax keeps going up so should theirs
- Claimants cannot afford these charges
- To use "working age" as the basic criteria is wrong. Ability to pay is the fair criteria.
- Because as of this time my income is very low and until I can find full time employment I feel I have paid enough into the system threw out my whole life to receive a little help!
- Because incomes & benefits are not keeping pace with inflation.
- Majority of people have to pay increased costs for Council Tax etc and this should apply to claimants too
- support should be 100% if on means tested benefits eg unemployed, sick etc
- Since it relates to claimants who are of working age, claimants should make every effort to find employment so that they can contribute to the welfare of the wider society.
- All forms of support more or less mean that people live beyond their means. The claimant should make cuts in their own lives not expect others to supplement their shortfalls.
- I know it is difficult to means test, but there are many people who have VERY low paid jobs and receive NO benefits/financial support from government or local authority. These people are part of society who are penalised because they work. Once all their amenity bills, including council tax, has been paid, there is very little money for food, clothes, bedding etc, let alone a trip to the cinema or a day at the seaside with their children. These people should receive a dispensation until their income is at a certain amount, then pay a reduced rate, until paying in full, depending on wage increments. Many pensioners have a good income, due to their private pensions having been very

profitable. These pensioners could maybe pay a higher amount. I appreciate they paid into their pensions for their working lives, but the younger generation, pro rata, to the pensioners with good incomes, will never benefit from a good income from pensions, or free bus passes etc.

This in turn would generate more income and replace the funds that the low paid would not spend on the council tax.

(I have seen couples in their late 20's, who cannot even afford to rent, because both are on minimum wage. Once rent is paid, plus the amenity bills, there is no money left. Its time there was some help for these floundering generation)

Initially there would be a huge cost to set up a computer programme that sends out annual declaration forms to pensioners and very low paid, but it can be done)

- The majority of people can work and should.
- Given the amount of tax people pay during their working lives, people in particularly vulnerable positions should pay zero.
Council tax is expensive, is chased aggressively and I think this fundamentally wrong. Not everyone benefits from it to the same extent either.
- The shortfall should be met by less Council staff or better trained to do the job. The support should come from central government not me.
- It is difficult to have a universal approach to this. Consideration should be given to individual circumstances, earnings, number and age of dependants, whether dependants are earning, and disabilities should all be considered. A gradual increase over a phased period may make it easier to implement successfully. So if trying to increase the claimant's contribution by 15% this could be done in yearly increments of 5%.
- Monies saved from more people actively contributing to the Council tax could be spent more wisely on much needed other services.
- The current high council tax levels in the borough are unsustainable for the majority of the residents. All residents should do their uttermost to contribute. As a result of lack of funding, the services we have seen have deteriorated in the last few years.
- cost of living in London is expensive, we should not be imposing more costs on those who cannot afford
- It is not enough. Where are people supposed to get this money from? You are pushing them into debt at a time they need your support! A wicked spiteful action!!
- I think that they should pay 50%. They probably use more services i.e. schools, etc than older people
- Wages are stagnant, benefits have been cut and inflation is too high, people in work are going to food banks, decrease your salaries
- There is too much assistance provided. Not working should not be a lifestyle choice funded by taxpayers. People should be encouraged to work.
- Despite assurances made by the government (IDS) that no one would be worse off working than on benefits, this promise was broken, (causing IDS resignation). Add to this the rise in the contribution of council tax paid by the most low paid and the quality

of life of the poorest has become a national disgrace for such a rich country as ours.

- Claimants may not have enough money to pay that much.
- The UK has had the longest drop in real-terms wages since the Napoleonic Wars. At the same time, the state has shrunk to the point that the basic safety nets (e.g. NHS, a fair benefits system) are becoming patchy. People on the lowest incomes need help more than ever.
- A reduction of 50% is more than generous enough; Bromley's council tax remains relatively low compared with other parts of the country.
- I would envisage a level between 25-50% to be appropriate. All residents of Bromley use the services, those who need support likely much more. Increasing the support would essentially be furthering the subsidy concept which I don't think is fair. Even a 75% rebate is pretty impressive...
- Each Applicant should state where the support is going. The support isn't necessarily supporting the tax payment: do they smoke ?; are they drug dependent ?; do they receive help with any addiction?; it's upon these things that the individual decisions should be made, for, it's these things the support money may be supporting.
- I believe a reduction in support is required to provide an incentive for people to seek employment
- It is not fair on disabled people of working age to pay the same as non-disabled people. If receiving Severe Disability Benefits then I think you should pay zero. It is not fair if you cannot and will not ever be able to work before retirement age.
- A maximum of 50% assistance for working age claimants would be more equitable towards other council tax payers.
- Cut the bureaucracy and double counting - just give people council tax relief if they meet certain criteria so either 0 or 100%
- I think it should be means tested an proportion determined
- for those in low income employment it must be difficult to live in an area like Bromley with its high living costs - for the sake of social cohesion and diversity we should be looking to assist those in financial difficulties
- The sharp recent increases in food and fuel poverty together with the problems caused by the Bedroom Tax have left vulnerable people less able to pay and in situations where they are choosing between food, essentials for their children, and paying their rent/bills. In this context even 25% of a Council tax bill (£29 a month) is unaffordable to some families. Council Tax should not be a driver for families being evicted - it is far more costly to the public purse to provide a homelessness intervention than it is to support them in staying housed through additional assistance with Council Tax bills.
- Because other councils give less assistance & people should pay for Bromley. In a lot of cases people don't manage money or prioritise what is important or essential.
- If they are of working age they should contribute more
- The level of support given by the council is unacceptable already for the majority of

council tax payers who are paying already over inflated bills. The less support given means the less we all pay overall. There should be strict means testing before qualifying for support. If people can afford things like mobile phones and things like Sky TV then I do not see why a discount should apply.

- The tax money could be better spent elsewhere.
- As a society we should be prepared to support those that are vulnerable. We are a wealthy enough society to be able to achieve this.
- It appears that the amount of support can be excessive.
- I am under 75 and have had to give up my job after 26 years if working at the same organisation due to cancer. As I have worked hard and have saved money I do not qualify for council tax support despite receiving ESA. I feel that despite having savings as I have always paid my contributions and bills due I should be entitled to more help than I am receiving at present.
- I am happy for support to remain at 75%, but am already paying far above the levels of services I receive as a result of the way in which the amount is determined and do not wish to see my tax increase in order to provide more support for others.
- People should be given reasons to go out and work. There are so many jobs available which don't need high end qualifications, just a will. 75% support just pushes people to not worry about doing anything.
- I am interested to know where you think individuals who are not working are going to get 25% from? There will be a huge range of reasons why people may not be working. cases should be looked at individually, not given a blanket amount they have to pay irrespective of circumstances.
- People should work
- Council tax is very high and the discount is very low especially for single parent families
- This is too generous. Many of these people have money to smoke and drink run modern mobile phones, sky dishes and 50 inch TVs etc when people of pensionable age are not eligible because they continue to work at the age of 70 to support such claimants whilst not having the money for all the luxuries aforementioned.
- I did not realise it was set so high. Assuming that people who need to rely on this are already in low council tax bands. To me, there is a disparity between the maximum discount a single person can receive (25% discount), to those on low income.
- Unfair on people with disability benefits. Most of the benefits are not raised as much as any council tax, rent etc so people always end up with less money.
- It should take into account not only if you are single person discount but whether you are working or not and also if you are in any age where is more difficult to get a job 55+ and if you have a disability. The CURRENT council tax where you are considered a single tenant and treat anybody the having the same level of income is unfair.
- Students/ low waged adult should be means tested and benefits/reduction made

accordingly.

- Encourages more personal responsibility on claimants
- Well not all people old enough to work do work because they go to college or uni. I think I pay enough council tax for everyone in my household.
- Greater fairness
- Because people are being reduced to poverty and destitution by the so called welfare reforms which are just cruel and cynical cut.
- Greater fairness
- I fully understand the need to look at all areas of public spending. However, as a volunteer with South west London law centre I do have concerns in relation to the most vulnerable. The benefit system is failing many people, especially those who rent from private landlords. Government policy (benefit caps, housing benefit no longer covering all the rent if you rent privately, benefit freezes or reductions, the council tax benefit being reduced) and market conditions (particularly rent rises due to the shortage of houses), while costs have increased mean that many people only have as little as £25 available after rent and energy costs to spend a week on food, clothes and medication. While it could be argued that it should not be the council's responsibility to further assist the most disadvantaged, central government is abdicating their responsibilities in this area so by default local government becomes the support of last resort. I therefore support if it is legally possible: A two tier system of CTS, with those who qualify for help in private accommodation receiving greater support than those in social housing. I base this on the study 'Citizens impact assessment - lowering the benefit cap' by the CAB that amongst other things found that the cap disproportionately affects households in high rent arrears and areas where there is less social housing such as many outer London boroughs. CTS being at a higher figure, such as at 90% for those who qualify who live in private rented accommodation and 75% - 80% for those who qualify who live in social housing.
- I don't feel that a general cap to all working aged support claimants represents a fair route to managing the funding that is allotted to providing council tax support. The percentage that should be paid should depend on income and not age.
- This matter is not as straight forward as per the (apparent) council's intention. I know that it would depend on the myriad of individual circumstances of individual recipient's.
- There are too many benefits available from multiple sources, including utilities. There is a major disincentive to paid employment.
- 50% should be the maximum!
- They don't get much unemployment benefit.
- I have worked all my life and paid all my dues, as much as I would love to carry on my disability does not allow me to work therefore every penny I can save helps.
- I have found paying council tax and spare room subsidy a real hardship.
- I think it should be reduced by at least 25% more when you see these people with

children, buying takeaways to feed them most days, they must have money to waste so they should be able to contribute more as they are the ones using these services most.

- Unless there is a valid reason people should pay their own way
- The council is under significant financial pressure, all benefits should be adjusted accordingly.
- Wages should be higher and not relying on council tax / rate payers to subsidise low wages.
- Matter of principle. If people cannot afford to pay, defer but not write off.
- They get it all ways. I know personally pensioners who have had a very good job but have spent it all enjoying themselves where myself I have never had a holiday or car in my life so have saved and deprived myself. All the younger ones have kids they can't afford and live in coffee shops. They don't cook and a restaurant owner tells me they eat most days and the cafe is full of buggies and kids.
- We would like to minimize the impact of maintaining working age-claimant support on receiving council tax and reducing council services. The current level of council tax is already a burden to households with no support.
- I think they receive too much support given to the people who are able to work and receive tax credit, child support, etc. an increase in the amount they pay to 50% would mean no more cuts in services.
- Lots of people take advantage of the scheme
- My wife and myself are perfectly happy with the benefits we already receive
- Because we cannot afford to pay this bill, it should be abolished.
- Some people are made so poor by paying council tax that it is not worth them waking up as they are worse off financially because they have low paid jobs and high rents. However, many do work and end up ill and at food banks.
- This is a disincentive to find work.
- If some genuine cases are assessed as needing more than 75% they should not have to depend on the operation of the hardship fund.
- Look at Wandsworth council, they have reduced council tax for 2 years and now frozen it. For the service provided by Bromley council which is partly non-existence maybe ways to reduce to coincide with your services provided should be looked at. There is other ways to make money by just looking at permits near stations.
- I disagree with this as I feel people should pay for services they receive.
- Believing that giving assistance to 'working age' residents in Bromley to extent 75% is not fair on those who pay council tax for services that we all use.
- I think that 50% is a more acceptable level and fairer for those who pay 100% but are

also on a low income.

- I am a fully paying council tax owner struggling with the full amount myself.
- Everybody should pay council tax
- I think 75% is an outrage, claimants should receive less support-in a number of cases claimants are self-employed and are not declaring their earnings and receiving the support when they don't need it.
- I think it sends the wrong message to the claimants. They need help but need to help themselves as well. I also think the council should review how long they get assistance by regular assessments of their situation.
- Because their paying a lot less but getting all the benefits still and more.
- It is not enough.
- The assistance should be at least 100%
- This causing hardship to us of working age but not able to work due to disability or long term illness. Just in 3 years CTS increased from 8.5 to 25%
- I struggle to pay CT at the 75%. Should not have to pay as council services. My son urgent needs have been scrapped so my son has been left on the scrap heap.
- People on benefit level income would find it difficult to pay, especially as benefits are currently not being uprated. You should consider assistance of 85%.
- More choose to spend more time in public houses
- It makes life difficult for people already struggling. Cost of living is very high.
- The resident has stated 'don't know' to Q1 so I put yes so that I could get to this page and advise you of his answer.
- Everyone should make the same contribution
- Increase council tax with the cost of living.
- Because you want to charge no more council tax, cut other council services or use the council reserve to pay for it.

Q2 If you think that Council should increase the level of assistance for working-age people from 75%, how do you think this should be funded? In particular, should the Council increase Council Tax or cut other Council services or use the Council reserves, or all three?

If you think services should be cut or have another suggestion, please write your answer here.

- The service received should be related to the % of council tax paid. i.e. pay 100%

received full service pay 25% receive a quarter of the service

- Level of support should be reduced not increased.
- Here's a thought, Conservatives. End austerity and insist that Government properly fund services. Though this might be a problem given the massive existential catastrophe that is Brexit. /slow hand clap
- Cut other welfare support to non-disabled out of work, such as housing benefit or other generous allowances.
- Increase efficiency. I came from Greenwich, where the council tax was lower and services were better, so it is possible to increase efficiency in Bromley.
- People with jobs should not be subsidizing those who don't work or don't get training so they can get a job that pays enough to cover their living expenses,
- Maybe you shouldn't spend our tax money on being aspiring private eyes setting up spy cameras in bedrooms to catch fly tippers, dream of running the council as a real estate developer, and instead focus on basic services, or pushing back on the cuts being imposed on your budget by the government.
- Do not think it should be increased.
- I do not think that council should increase the level of assistance for working- age people from 75 percent.
- I would cut support
- As the proportion of residents receiving the maximum subsidy will be relatively low, a modest increase in council tax could go a long way to helping those most in need. Council reserves could be used if the necessary increase is deemed unpalatable. Bromley is, by and large, a wealthy borough, therefore we can afford to support our most needy residents. Services should not be cut to reduce council tax - we all benefit from council services.
- Make people receiving the benefit pay it back in time to the community. helping the elderly, litter collection, just a few examples
- I don't think you should increase the level of assistance
- In the current circumstances, the Council should seriously review existing expenditures and see if any non-critical services could be cut or delivered in more cost-efficient manner.
- This is my point - 50% would be fairer and then we could have better libraries.
- The council should cut back on unnecessary expenses such as paid for lunches for staff. All councils throughout the country are guilty of wasting money on new fancy office buildings using funds from the public purse which could be used to maintain services and offer assistance to those most vulnerable.
- I do not think council should increase level of assistance
- Stop wasting money on new traffic schemes which are unnecessary. Increase charges

at council tips for out of borough users. It's been £3 ever since the permits were introduced

- the size of government and local councils needs to be drastically reduced, especially the high wages paid to senior council staff
- I do not think the level of assistance should be increased.
- I would support closing one of the libraries, either Petts Wood or Southborough lane. They are very close to each other with adequate transport links between the two
- Able-bodied people should receive no council tax support. Current situation is that general population is just subsidizing those who can't be bothered to work and fulfil their financial obligations.
- Although I disagree with the provision of financial support through Council Tax reductions I believe that the council should raise sufficient funds through the council tax to enable it to provide a greater level of services to the whole community. The need for higher taxation also seemed to sit well with much of the electorate at the last General Election. Therefore I believe that the council should increase the level of council tax across the board such that a referendum will be necessary. This will test the true level of voter support and provide guidance for national government on the specific issue of local finances and more generally on the true willingness of the electorate to pay more tax.
- No more cuts to services
- No cut
- I think you need to look at why they are on a low income or no income and their circumstances to understand why they need help. I work full time to pay my bills and get no support and because I earn just above the threshold we are always the ones penalised and no support offered
- Too much help
- There should be no cuts. Why should the people who pay suffer for those who do not pay the full amount?
- Service should be cut, or reduced to transition into the real world and promote better personal budgeting
- Reduce costs. Cost reductions do not automatically lead to service reductions. It's concerning this is not one of the options above being considered. No business would approach the problem by assuming costs could not be reduced.
- I'm not fully aware of all services but practical thinking point to those services that have the least amount of impact can be cut.
- I think a review of services should be undertaken - is it all necessary or are some 'nice to have'?
- I don't think the level of assistance should increase.
- I think assistance should be reduced but if you are going to increase assistance then

cut services. Of course people will say make those who can pay more (that is effectively what would happen if you increase council tax or use council reserves).

- I don't think it should be increased.
- If the council increases the level of assistance, non-essential services should be cut to fund such an increase. Unfortunately though, this would negatively impact non-claimants who are the ones paying their council tax.
- Nothing should be cut further: we all have to pay the council tax rates to live in the area. I do not use the NHS, schools, dentists, any support or other services, literally all I use is the roads and the bin collections (and street lights, though there is no street cleaning on my road), yet I pay 100%. Why should I pay more when I am not using council services, yet people who use them 100% pay less council tax? Flawed logic.
- Do not cut services: they are already too poorly funded
- It should not be increased!
- I believe the total support fund is probably more than enough. The allocation of support fund is what needs revision, not the size of the fund. Criteria that decide who receives support should be revised, and a sliding scale determining how much support an individual receives should be introduced.
- I would be happy to pay (a little) more council tax if it means that working-aged people who are in poor financial circumstances do not have to pay. Making the council tax system more progressive - increasing at top bands and decreasing at bottom bands would be fairer, given the extremely regressive nature of council tax.
- Reduce social security support
- Increase council tax more for wealthier residents
- The level of assistance should be cut to 50%
- I don't think the level of assistance should be increased and therefore none of the above measures should be considered
- if people are of a working age then they should be working and paying their way
- Nothing service should be cut I believe we all pay enough of our taxes
- I think that many residents who live in their own would be happy to receive a lower discount on their council tax to help.
- Not sure what services but this should be looked at.
- Government should adopt health and social care and emergency services at a national level relieving local councils.
- The borough should bring things "back in house" & stop employing outside agencies to do things that they used to. Jobs are not done properly & the borough does not take its responsibility to its residents seriously.
- I think the money saved from a modest cut could be reinvested in social services in the

community.

- there is no suggestion here for introducing better management to drive efficiencies and bring costs down This is a viable alternative to cutting services
- Cut council pensions
- Really consider the costs and benefits of your recycling arrangements. Do not do things just to be seen to do something, make it financially viable
- Review expenditure in council offices i.e. headcount, stationary, offices
- Reduce the level of assistance.
- They must pay to live in the Borough like everybody else
- Don't agree with increasing assistance
- MPs and other higher earners should have they salaries decreased.
- Don't raise assistance, cut it to 50%.
- I don't believe the level of assistance should be increased
- Anyone with a property in the borough that is a second home should be expected to pay more.
- Attempt to put greater pressure on the central government for an increase in the central grant, and to overhaul the council tax system which is ludicrously based on the theoretical value of a property >25 years ago due to the bands never having been re-valued.
I note that you are not able to significantly increase council tax without a referendum, and that the cost of this may be prohibitive. I also question why you suggest use of the reserves when this is generally not legally allowable or wise.
- Council Tax is high enough now and the people of the borough should not be subject to any further burden
- DO NOT cut services or put up council tax
- Stop funding freedom passes for Bromley residents who own their own home.
- Do neither options quoted above in "1". Assistance should not be increased but decreased.
- There won't be any services left to cut... Your privatisation of crucial services already gone
- support / assistance should be drastically cut back
- Make payments fairer for all. It's always those on lower incomes that don't meet the criteria for assistance that struggle the most.
- Start means testing for pensioners - it is deeply unfair to benefit a population who have

benefited more over the last 2-3 decades. Make them contribute more.

- Please see note one, shut down or make service such as libraries and other minority/speciality services pay as you use, not all CT payers should have to subsidise these.
- Pay LOWER increases in wages to Managerial staff!
- Odd question - given that I chose the option to say that I think the council should reduce the level of assistance
- Increase tax for parents. Proper 'green tax'. Then it might even be worth bothering recycling
- I don't not think that it should be increased, therefore none of the above.
- Some services can always be cut.
Why not charge for library membership or why not put all the parks into a trust and have fundraising events which will make people work to keep their green spaces and appreciate them a bit more.
- I think people would rather pay more council taxes than keep cutting services which people rely on otherwise their quality of life is getting worse.[i.e. 15 mins slots for homecare is ridiculous]
- It should be reduced from 75% and the money saved should be used to benefit all the people, not the few claiming rather than working for no good reason.
- Tax landlords who are strangling stopping first time buyers
- This council has hundreds of millions of pounds in reserves and should be using them to the physical benefit of its residents
- Landlords can foot some of the bill, but not be allowed to pass that onto their residents.
- Increase council tax at the top bands. Millionaires should be paying more than the disabled.
- I do not think that the level of assistance should be increased
- None of the above.
- Bromley council have plenty in reserve and should use it to help local residents.
- Too many services being cut so more people should be made to contribute through Council Tax
- Invest less on Iceland and give it back to the community.
- Salaries for councillors and those running the council should be cut
- I do not think the council to increase the level of support
- If the council tax assistance is increased then the option for the people in working age

doing work to assist the council maintain the level of services should be explored. If the council is supporting people then it should reflect in the quality of maintenance of its areas and such people should be contributing by their time if they are looking for assistance.

- People are going without food and heating with the government's austerity cuts. Paying more council tax will kill more people as they will have to give up food and or heating to pay.
- Services are already being cut to the bone. Let the people with the most pay a little more.
- Increase council for the richest members of the borough.
- Drop it to 50%
- I don't agree the level of assistance should increase, but if the Council decides that, what is the justification? And how has the Council decided to meet the extra cost? It is not for residents to determine this, but should be a decision taken by the Council after considering the impacts for funding and where the money is to be found.
- It would only take a small amount of reserves.
- Reinstate all the people who lost their jobs when universal credit was introduced. Currently trying to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support is a complete nightmare for people and very soon they get into rent arrears and start receiving letters from their landlords threatening court action, repossession etc. The landlords are aware that Housing Benefit is taking in some cases months to sort out, yet they continue to threatening action against people who have no way of moving their claims forward - they are wholly dependant on action from Housing Benefit. This needs to be sorted out urgently as I work with terminally ill clients and their conditions are often made worse because they get caught in this 'Catch 22' situation.
- Shouldn't increase assistance. It should be reduced.
- Decisions on who is eligible to receive help paying Council Tax should be based on a person's income and savings and the amount of Council Tax they pay. A non-dependant adult who lives in a person's house who is not liable for the Council Tax themselves, should now contribute more depending on how much income that non-dependant has coming in. The amount non-dependants expected to pay should be doubled.
- Sell some of the property you are stockpiling. It is no use being a council who is worth lots of money if that money is tied up in property and can't be used to serve residents. You could also save money on the services you currently provide by getting better companies to undertake the work. I have seen appalling roadworks being carried out that are clearly unsafe - it will cost you a lot more to pay up when people sue you for dangerous work than to get hire companies who charge more but don't cut corners. Likewise, your rubbish service mean open topped bins in an area with a huge fox population and lack of street bins means people dumping rubbish regularly, which you then have to pay to clear up. Along with all the recycling your appalling bin contractors regularly throw down the street. Save money by doing the job properly the first time around.
- Use the council's assets in a better way, leverage the council's extensive property

portfolio and rethink the use of some of the venues.

- I think the level of assistance should only be 70% so working age people would be liable to pay at least 30%.
- May we should be paying £1 per bag of rubbish bin.
- Bromley council should lobby the Government against this "localisation" of Council Tax Benefit, and publicly call for the reinstatement of a fully-funded national system
- Since claimants are working-age people, the support should be decreased and instead working-age people should find employment so that they can contribute to the services that they avail from the council.
- No services should be cut in order to give more relief to those on low incomes.
- Have less council staff or make their purchasing more effective.
- A review of service provision to see where efficiencies can be made to reduce the cost of provision of those services. This should precede any increase of council tax or reduction in service provision.
- N/A-see previous answer-believe level of assistance should be cut NOT increased
- The current council tax levels are already too high which is not sustainable for most households. Unfortunately the service levels have also been impacted in recent years and we urge that the council asks for more funding or look at reserve funds to help fund any gap.
- The wealthier fit and healthy should support the disabled, sick and unemployed - it is the children who suffer the most. Bromley is full of wealthier people (I am one!) who ought to support the community more.
- Reduce managers wages, stop contracting out works to private companies
- It should not be increased. Other people should not be made to suffer through increases to council tax or cuts in services.
- Definitely NOT increase the level of assistance!!!
- Services do not serve all, in the sense that they serve everybody: they need not be cut, just supported by those who use them: for example, since peace is no longer enforced in public libraries, by staff who now make as much noise as the undisciplined users, I no longer use them; yet, I have to contribute to their maintenance: so ever wants to use them, should pay: if an unregistered person wants to, then he should pay too: but upon his arrival.
- I do not believe the 75 per cent threshold should be increased. It should be reduced
- The council is overstaffed. Especially at senior level. Get rid of some staff. And stop the practice of making people 'redundant'. How many council staff have you had in the last 5 years that have actually worked beyond 60? I know enough about public service employment to know that staff just sit there counting the days before they qualify for full pension, then lo and behold suddenly they are made redundant!!

- Better land and estate management, compulsory purchase orders,
- why protect completely those of pensioner age - there are a lot of rich pensioners in the Borough - while restricting support of the lower paid
- No increase in assistance
- Services should not be cut. Reduce the level of assistance for working age people.
- I'm not happy with any of the above.
- They should be no cut in services
- I don't think that services should be cut, but do not agree with increasing the level of assistance.
- it should provide initiatives for those not working to increase their chances of employment
- Services should cut and current council tax should reduce. Those who are working hard should not be ripped off to feed others.
- 1 and 3 would not be well received by anyone, I am sure, hence why I do not support the increase for this benefit. However, if it needed it, I think it should come from what we all gain from it - e.g. our services, and if not everyone pays then we can see this in what we receive as a service. I do not think other people's council tax should increase to cover the costs.
- Use young offenders, those people doing community service to do jobs such as street cleaning, painting, and general tidying up jobs that are needed.
- Tax according to your level of income, disability, age NOT ONLY Single Person discount. The reduction is still too little.
- Services cannot be cut any further!! They have already been cut by far too much. There are ever increasing demands on the council's funds with more people moving into this borough. Have the government been asked to provide more funding?
- As the council provides a safety net for those in need it is fair that those receiving help should only do so for the least time required.
- if it is decided to increase support then increase council tax
- For a large wealthy borough it handles its finances very poorly. Services are already poor. Maybe they should look at council services in general to fund some improvement. Other boroughs give more including free dustbins.
- Council should get more money from government.
- Too many cut backs in the wrong places. Help people who need it.
- Services should not be cut because there have already been some cuts IE, refuse collection now every two weeks and road maintenance.
- Local buses could be cut during off peak times if you have a service at regular times

and are reliable, people will know when to call them to go and return.

- Not cut to services but cut the compensation savings to fund council tax support. All work should pay a wage that does not need others to subsidise it.
- They have been cut enough.
- Increase frequency of market instead of Friday & Saturday only-Generate more revenue space allocation.

Increase more parking permit space and review parking permit price.

Convert all street lights to energy saving bulbs and timer.

Public car park - use 50% of lighting and convert all lights and energy saving bulbs & timer

- Cut assistance given as too many people abuse the system
- The government should pay more to the council. I think people who are on a low income should not pay anything towards council tax.
- Not really
- Stop repaving all over the place, the paving is dangerous and is a waste of money. Get solar powered street lights and save money and energy. And put solar panels on all public buildings to save money.
- With the council everything is about making money. All what is charged for council tax is rubbish. We never see a police officer patrolling our streets, we never get our roads swept, have to get complaints online to get one. Street lights have been reduced. So looking at all respective, council tax should be reduced.
- I am suggesting reducing assistance, not increasing. No cuts in services hence will be needed. (hopefully)
- To maintain use a combination of all three measures: Pragmatism is the better approach rather than pandering to socialist or right wing ideas. Incremental change for EVERYTHING will lessen the pain for everyone.
- In the past few decades increased pressure has been brought to bear upon the council. The borough does a great deal to support all sort of groups as individuals. I am 62 will hopefully retire at 66 and have paid council tax since residing here 46 years ago. I have never been out of work and yet see many who won't/don't/can't work being supported. No to cutting services, it's not fair on those of us who always have both worked and paid full amounts and contribute to do so. I struggle since becoming a widow in 2016 but still have to carry on and pay this bill.
- According to the need of our community.
- Salary & benefits of senior management should be reviewed. These can be excessive.
- Collect rubbish every 2 - 3 weeks.
- Cut benefits
- I think I shouldn't be paying for other peoples support. How much is in the council

reserve? Knowing this amount would be very helpful.

- As a disabled lady who struggles to walk I have noticed the increased abuse of Blue Badges and feel the council could gain a lot of money in fines if more people abusing them could be stopped. I have seen vans using them.
- Cut back on red tape- Managers & chief execs wages.
- Cut the red tape, too many unneeded jobs in council office.
- Fixed rate for every three years.
- Don't assist. Don't increase council tax. Cut other council services or use council reserves. Don't increase the lack of assistance for working age people from 75%.
- more toilets needed in Orpington

Q3 The Council has a hardship fund of £100,000 to protect the most vulnerable. This is to provide extra help to residents who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship and are unable to pay their Council Tax. Do you agree that there should be a hardship fund? Do you agree the level of funding at £100,000 is correct? If you disagree please write your answer here:

- With all the cuts to benefits and wages people can't afford food let alone buy essential home items
- People should be responsible for themselves and not rely on handouts.
- Should perhaps be more.
- Because it is impossible to answer without info on number of cases.
- It should be higher as property/rent is always increasing and there are many vulnerable residents in the area
- There is not enough information here to indicate whether £100,000 is enough.
- It is impossible to have an exact opinion without knowing if the £100,000 hardship fund has historically been enough or is underfunded.
- It's probably too small, but I actually have no way of knowing without more contextualising statistics.
- Find other ways via employment to pay tax.
- I am afraid I cannot answer whether the 100,000 GBP is enough or not as I don't know the supply/demand ratio at present. I'd envisage that the funds could be higher, provided it's for exceptional hardship, i.e. a one-off and nothing recurrent!
- I have to write 'No ', because although I agree with the charitable principle, the choices of question don't allow for my answer: again, there should always be merciful assistance, but only if the applicant agrees to refrain from, say, any of the above-mentioned activities

before their receipt.

- We should just stick to the tax support scheme
- I believe the level of support is too generous and should be reduced
- It should be equal to the needs of the borough. On that basis £100K does not seem like enough.
- £1 per each Bromley resident - £300k
- As there are more people going through financial difficulties it would be just logical that the level of funding should be increased.
- I do not know how many families are affected. The amount might not be sufficient.
- It should be more
- The correct level depends on whether there exists a sufficiently strict means test.
- What does the 100,000 cover? You have not explained.
- Just give 0% if meet certain criteria, why manage an additional scheme?
- It doesn't indicate what the need is in the borough - it would be helpful to know how the amount is determined.
- £100k for an authority of Bromley's size seems too low but without knowing how much of the fund was used, the number of claimants helped (and turned away / refused) it is difficult to be categorical on this point.
- Although £100,000 is a substantial sum, it doesn't seem possible that there could be enough individuals who are exceptionally poor to make it necessary to increase this amount. Hopefully not though and it is good to know that this much money is available.
- This figure is sufficient to pay fewer than 72 families' Council tax bills each month (based on Band D Council tax) or fewer than 300 families' bills each month if they are already in receipt of 75% relief.
According to 2011 census data, Bromley has:
 - Over 4,900 households with dependent children and no adults in employment
 - Over 2,900 lone parent households where the parent is in part time work
 - Nearly 30,000 households where at least one adult has a long term health condition or disability - of which over 5,350 house dependent children.Even assuming there is considerable crossover between the first and last of these categories, this indicates that in the region of 40,000 households in Bromley had characteristics strongly predictive of financial hardship in 2011, prior to the disability benefits changes which the UN this week described as a "human catastrophe"; the Bedroom Tax; and significant food inflation triggered by a number of factors including the impact of the devalued pound on food import costs following the Brexit referendum.
In this context there is a clear and compelling need to make more provision for the households most in need in our Borough.
- No knowledge of number of cases however £100,000 feels inadequate

- If there were less people having a council tax discount applied, everybody's overall bill would be less and more affordable for more households. There would be less people in arrears if everybody pulled their weight.
- The level of funding should be more flexible, such that it is sufficient for all those that need it.
- Survey is wrong! I disagree because I disagree with there being a fund in the first place. Sort your forms out!
- I don't think the public should pay people who cannot control their money matters, cigarettes alcohol dogs and cats cost more than food and a roof over your head
- This depends on how many people are likely to apply and what this fund has to cover. The amount should be allocated in relation to the budget as a whole
- We have, in general, a tendency, to offer too much support.
- Potential to increase if necessary
- I have no idea what the figure should be set at..... but 100,000 doesn't sound like a lot of money.
- Fix the root cause; why they are in hardship. If they have lost money in betting, shutdown the betting shops. If their misery is because of alcohol then stop sale of alcohol. If it is because of other partner then punish the partner BUT STOP ripping off those who are working hard to live their life. Stop increasing council and other taxes.
- I cannot possibly comment without further information on the level of demand for such a fund.
- I do not believe there are sincere people who are suffering that much hardship in the LBB.
- In my opinion these are not a yes or no question. I strongly believe in helping those who is facing financial hardship but what are the criteria to select which resident really needs help? I think the level of funding should be calculated per person (or household) and then understand how much is needed to provide help. Starting from a specific amount will reduce the level of help provided should the number of resident in need rise.
- The hardship fund should be higher, as many people are experiencing difficulties already and extra charges will bring new people into the frame.
- It's difficult for a resident to know how many cases of hardship the Council has to deal with but certainly vulnerable people who are disabled or have mental health problems should be protected in my view and £100,000 doesn't seem a great deal of money.
- I am sure it is not enough money, and I cannot fully comment as I am not sure how you vet "hardship", and how this is governed.
- I have no visibility of this Fund and how well used it is so have said I agree
- It should be increased

- Is £100,000 really enough for a Borough the size, and population, of Bromley?
- I think that having a larger amount of funding may help the council to better support those that are in a crisis and needs financial support.
 - There should be more money in the fund to help disabled people on a low income.
 - How many people need it?
If there are 100,000 people then £1 each is not enough. If there are 10 people then it may be too much but as you don't say, I don't know.
 - Maybe a little more.
 - The support of the budget should be increased sufficiently to enable all necessary support to be given without resource to a hardship fund.
 - It seems to be an extremely small sum of money for the number of people who suffer hardship in Bromley.
 - There should be limits, people now seem to know how the council system works so 'milk it' and this affects others. This all depends on what category this is classed a. People living as tenants 3 years + should be eligible.
 - It could be decreased not by more than 10%, however knowing the council you'll just see my first sentence and ignore the second. DONT.
 - As much as you can.
 - The funds could be increased if council salaries were more realistic.
 - Always struggled by on my own and gone without, I think others should try it.
 - I do not think a hardship fund should be provided by the council. I think it more appropriate for people to turn to their own families for help.
 - This should be more as there are more families struggling financially now.
 - It should be increased by at least 50%
 - Because I have experienced financial hardship and still expected to pay, I work also.
 - Reduce by 20% to 80K
 - I think some of these people need to learn to help themselves and plan
 - The minimum hardship fund should be £150,000
 - Not enough information to answer Q2.
 - I don't know if that level of support is adequate or not. If support was at 85 - 90% there would not be so much need for a hardship fund.
 - Hardship cases should not be refused because £100,000 has already been allocated.
 - As I am an elderly 76 year old pensioner having to live off a very low income, I have an arthritic condition to cope with, however I do not seem to qualify for any income support as regards disability.
 - Not enough.
 - Not sure. I am low waged and pay £68 per month, I feel that's a lot for a person on low wage single parent.
 - Unpredictable turn of events due to the economic climate. I think if it were possible to increase the amount it should be done.
 - £100,000 doesn't sound like enough money.

Q4 This question consist of 3 parts:

- Do you agree Council Tax Support should be reduced to 4 weeks for customers who leave Great Britain temporarily?**
- Do you agree that Council Tax Support should only cover the cost of 2 children in families rather than unlimited number of children?**
- Do you agree that customers in receipt of Employment Support Allowance should**

only receive additional assistance if they are in the Support Group?

- With the games the DWP are playing with benefit claimants, I don't trust the selection of which group somebody is placed in.
- You haven't defined "Support Group". How are we supposed to answer that question?
- I think it should be capped at two children regardless.
- There is no need to follow the petty victimisation of the vulnerable that is led by central government.
- All children should be covered by scheme unless working etc. ESA recipients should receive assistance whilst looking for work.
- Don't see why there should be a limit on no of children
- Unfortunately, I do not know what is "Employment Support Allowance", not "Support Group".
- People on all benefits should receive the additional benefit
- These are detailed policy questions, if you think you are going to get decent responses you are probably mistaken.
- Aligning yourself with these benefit rules might be financially beneficially, but ethically is very dodgy as it puts more pressure and burden onto those in the worst positions to deal with it.
- If you are disabled how are you supposed to find money to pay council tax!
- They should not receive assistance this way, the system needs to be simplified.
- Capping support at two children penalises the children, not the adults. This idea is predicated on the false assumption that poor people are reckless if they have more than 2 children, but there are all sort of complex reasons why families may have multiple children, for example domestic abuse situations and rape. Cutting benefits in these cases means less money for the innocent children who didn't ask to be in that situation.
- More support is needed for these families/individuals.
- Again, these proposals seem unnecessarily cruel. People respond to incentives, but this seems increasingly harsh
- Unable to comment on this question as I am not aware of the conditions for Employment Support Allowance or the Support Group
- Those in the support group like myself, get extra esa support. I know I need that extra money but I also need to use the council facilities that feel good I'm paying my part to.
- I particularly agree with number 3, people should not be able to collect ESA and lock themselves away, they should be made to join support groups as even the

fact they have to get out the house helps with a daily routine that will help prepare them for work. Well it did for me.

- There could be one off exceptional hardship cases that need assistance who are not in the Support Group
- Persecuting those who have more than 3 children is a direct violation of human rights. Accidents can and do happen. By implying further restrictions on children numbers within a family women will be left with no alternative but to have terminations, the impact this can have on an individual can increase the cost to the council services in the long term when mental health support and counselling is required. This will also contribute to a rise in 'back-yard' abortions which will put a further strain on the NHS and council services.
- What is the Support Group? If you qualify for support allowance you are on a low income. Don't give with one hand and take back with another.
- The children in poor families need help. Unemployed and large families should be helped to be self-supporting and find work but also helped when they are struggling.
- Please just stop trying to make life difficult for people who need more support.
- Because again, you haven't explained what the support group is. If you are on EMA, 25% of your council tax is very difficult to find, along with food
- I repeat my previous comment that discretionary financial support should not be a local government function.
- Return the liability to 0% for those on all benefits except Tax Credits.
- It's not fair that families with several children don't have to cover them but families with up to two (which is the average for most families) must still cover them. If you are going to approach it in this way you should make all children covered rather than if it's more than two.
- Because esa claimants are still struggling to find employment these people still have a disability mental or physical
- I don't know the answer to this. Can those on ESA afford the council tax, or does this mean they'd be relying on food banks? My taxes are partly paid to help the disadvantaged.
- I agree, provided that inclusion is not onerous and does not marginalise those in need.
- If people can afford to leave the U.K. for long periods of time they can afford to pay for their council tax in full.
If you keep giving out support there is no incentive to work.
- The criteria and evaluations for the support group have been made by people whose motive is profit for their shareholders, not fairness.
- First off, we are not customers. We are residents and brothers and sisters and neighbours but not customers because a customer is free to choose where to buy

goods and services, who to pay and I know that there is no other Council where I live. Secondly, whoever can and is entitled to get Council Tax Support should be able to do so. Thirdly, if you had three children hungry and wanting to eat would you feed only two? And if you asked me to help you and I gave you a loaf of bread would you share the bread between only two of three of your children? And lastly, I don't know what Support Group is but if you can help do so to whoever needs it.

- Leave country - stopped immediately. Children - only have them if you can afford them in the first place. No ESA.
- I do not understand the question sufficiently to agree - what is the Support Group? There could be people whose personal/ social circumstances make being in the Support Group untenable.
- They are already getting help through ESA why should they be offered more help by the support group, when there is other people out there in need for more help that are on a lower income and a single parent.
- I don't even know what The Support Group is. Stop making life difficult for the poor. Your reserves are obscene. Families are struggling and you continue to stuff the council coffers at the expense of the vulnerable. Where is the council's humanity and kindness? Fight ISIS not local, ordinary people. We are not the enemy.
- Children should not have less support just because they have more siblings, support will give them a better chance in life
- The unemployed should not have to pay Council Tax in the same way that they would not pay NI or Income Tax.
- Not sure what question 3 means.
- Again a sliding scale based on income would be the best solution
- If you leave Britain temporarily, either to care for a sick relative or perhaps you've obtained some temporary low paid work overseas, you shouldn't be penalised for this. Reducing the time people get support may result in people becoming homeless on their return to the UK.
We should not penalise people for having more than 2 children.
People in receipt of ESA get this benefit because they need help with the basic cost of living, therefore they should automatically receive additional assistance.
- These are very loaded questions. You are suggesting that I should agree with all the statements.
- I don't think ANYONE in receipt of Employment Support should receive Council Tax relief. They should all pay higher Council tax proportion, and if necessary receive higher benefits elsewhere to help pay it - that is the right way to assess the total needs of low income people, not piecemeal relief here and there
- Under 1 above it should be reduced to 2 weeks
- We're an aging continent. We should not remove any support for added children.

- depending on the disability
 - If their disability is lifelong the support would be required throughout their entire life.
 - Yes I agree with reduction to this schemes as indicated, however I would advocate complete withdrawal of this benefit.
 - Q2. It is not, and should not be, the function of a local authority to place financial limits on family life.
Q3. ESA provides funds to offset personal circumstances and should not be clawed back in tax.
 - Re 3 - I do not know what this means.
Re 2 - Using taxation policy to penalise and therefore impoverish larger families is absolutely immoral and wrong.
 - Si led people have considerably more expenses than able bodied people, and their lives are always more difficult. It is only fair that we try to even this up.
 - If you need the money you need the money. Having too many rules just discourages people from making a claim, so you end up with people not getting what they are entitled to and others, who know how to play the system, getting every penny.
 - The cap on the number of children was only recently introduced. Some people have large families of older children who are still in education or training and therefore need additional support. People on ESA may also have families to support.
 - It is not right to penalise children in larger families, particularly in the context of the removal of child benefit for more than two children. If the aim is to ensure that people don't have children when they don't have the resources to support them, I don't think a change to an obscure council tax regulation will have much effect. On the other hand, this change will no doubt make life a lot harder for existing families with more than two children.
 - A full range of circumstances ought to be considered
 - If families are getting Tax Credits they shouldn't get support as well.
 - Residents in receipt of ESA need extra support no matter what level they are paid at. Families with more than 2 children should not be penalised because they have more.
- 4 Weeks is insufficient to cover some who may need to stay abroad in cases where they have sick relatives, or fall sick themselves. If this were to be implemented, there would be a need for discretion to award for longer periods if good cause was proven.
- If someone is receiving ESA, how are they supposed to be in a position to pay Council Tax?
 - If customers leave the country they can clearly afford to travel so why should the

council support them financially.

- In view of increasing poverty amongst families with children, I think it should be increased.
- It would be unfair to discriminate against families with more than two children who are current residents of the borough. Instead new residents of the borough and those families presently resident with two children should be advised of the consequences of having more than two children.
- pay your own way
- I would add a time limit of say 3-6 months
- These proposed cuts on the resources of the most vulnerable in our society are spiteful and counter-productive. I recognise that central government funding for local authorities has been slashed and so the only option is to increase council tax.
- ESA has been reduced for people newly claiming in the work group so to remove additional assistance would be discrimination against people who are ill and vulnerable.
- People newly on ESA take a long time to adjust to the drop in income because of fixed outgoing so need support - otherwise they fall into debt which can make it even more difficult to resume work
- Less than 13/52 weeks is fair enough, but 4 could easily be an extended holiday, or a holiday where someone falls ill. 8 weeks seems more of a safeguard - anyone leaving for that long would appear to have 'left' and not just be away for a while. (Special cases could still be considered).
No logic in limiting support to 2 children.
- In principle the Answer to '2' could be a 'yes' only if there is Parliamentary Legislation - family planning is not local government's work.
- Because they must be getting their benefit for a reason. Therefore it would cause them even more hardship and that is not fair.
- People on ESA are struggling to maintain life as it is weather that be via there health or struggling to find work, ESA should help support people to make life easier not harder all it does is cause more stress and emotional and mental depression
- Some flexibility is required
- All who are in need should receive it.
- The costs of bringing up more than two children cannot be reversed when there are three or more children already in a family. There should be a moratorium on limiting support to families based on two children, for 10 years to allow the information and advice to parents to properly work through the system over the years, then the choices they make about the number of children in a family will have been considered. It is wrong at any time to retrospectively change the rules and throw families onto hardship funds and food banks. A disgrace in a rich

country. The government has done this but I do not want Bromley to do the same.

- Esa impossible to live on
- There are fluctuating levels of physical and mental health disabilities which qualify for either of those benefits. The people suffering with those conditions need additional support whichever group they have been assessed as eligible for.
- I don't understand what the support group is
- Question 1. If customers leave GB, even temporarily, they should not get any council tax support.
- Bromley is an affluent borough - with many residents who could easily pay a little more in council tax to avoid punishing poor households as proposed. Option two literally takes food out of the mouths of children. This is abominable.
- Anyone receiving ESA is obviously having problems. The type should not affect any assistance.
- This should be done on a case by case basis. The Government is already trying to lower the amount of benefits given to the needy, so I don't think taking away Council Tax Support also will help the matter.
- I think it should be available for anyone in receipt of ESA
- It needs to be appropriate and tested not arbitrary
- Why should they have to be in the support group?
- If someone leaves the UK temporarily I don't think that they should receive any benefits, if they can afford the cost of a passport, flights etc., then they should not be getting any support whatsoever
- I don't feel I know enough about the options to state one way or the other
- People genuinely too ill/disabled to work also need help paying
- I think we should cut subsidies to wealthy home-owning pensioners rather than those claiming Council Tax Support.
- I think customers should receive assistance which ever group they are in. Not only those in the support group.
- Do not penalise those who are mentally or physically disadvantaged, please!
- They should receive help regardless
- 1 Why would you leave for more than a month, how do you want to work?
2 Support should be given pro rata of the number of children.
3 financial considerations should rule if help is needed.
- Esa still face barriers to work

- What is the 'Support Group'? ESA in London is too low.
- 3 children should be allowed not 2.
- I cannot answer this as I don't know what ESA is or what the support group is.
- I need more information to answer questions 2/3.
- Filling this questionnaire has left a sour taste in my mouth. Bromley council look like they want to take more from the vulnerable instead after asking a little more from those with wealth in the borough
- These people are under enough pressure to make ends meet. If they are receiving support then that is for a valid reason, else people get poorer and the additional problems that go with that.
- people in the ESA support group are either sick or disabled and may therefore be only able to take limited options available through no particular fault of their own and should therefore receive assistance
- I'm disabled and not in the support group I'm unable to work so solely rely upon benefits this would affect me greatly if I had to pay full council tax.
- You haven't defined what the support group is so I feel uneasy answering question 3.
- People unfortunate enough to be in receipt of E S A NEED support. That's why they are on E S A.
- Q2) Council tax is a fixed amount, how does having more children make a jot of difference to CTAX bills?
- Forcing people into support groups against their wishes is unjust and cruel.
- I don't agree with question 1. If people leave the country for whatever reason they could return in deep hardship & may need additional support.
- Support should only be allowed to those with 0 or 1 kids
- Having never been allowed to claim benefits of any kind, I do not understand what this question means, or how to answer.
- How are we supposed to vote on that issue without you telling us what the "support group" is or means?
You shouldn't be having people voting to change other people's lives without the issues being clear.
- I don't know what the Support Group is, therefore I don't feel able to have an opinion on the above question. It would help to have some additional information available alongside the questions...
- No further hand outs
- People on ESA should receive assistance based on their ability to pay. It's difficult

for people to support themselves on ESA and need to be given every assistance.

- Why is council tax being spent on people's kids? If you can't afford to have kids don't have them.
- It may cause them financial difficulties.
- These questions are biased towards a yes answer
- Not enough support groups to make this fair
- Why is another layer of support required? More administration costs?
- Temporarily leaving Great Britain gives too easy a get out clause for the Council
Stopping support for over two children is to the detriment current large families and can plunge them into instant financial problems
Gaining Employment Support Allowance may involve some time delay and would disadvantage those who are having to go through the process and would add to financial pressure
- I do not have a definition of what a Support Group is.
- Some people who are not in a support groups are still in need through illness like Cancer, Depression, MS and HIV. They should still receive assistance.
- I have no idea about this
- I think it is unfair to limit to two children as that may disadvantage children in larger families.
- Surely, if someone has been means-tested and are receiving ESA, they'd automatically be eligible for Council Tax Support? Why would they be excluded?
- Those in the work related activity group for ESA may well be unable to work due to the impact of an injury, accident or long term condition. They want to work, but often are unable to at the moment, and applying extra pressure to them will not help them get into work any quicker. I would like to see the work related activity group receive the same level of support as those in the ESA support group.
- I don't know enough about ESA to comment.
- We should be a more caring society.
- A lot of people are put in the wrong ESA group due to lies told by assessors at ESA assessments. The same decisions are made by non-medical experts who ignore the advice of Dr's and therapists.
- It is unfair for a family with 4 children to get help for two children, because children eat too much. All children are equal.
- The government are pursuing a policy of withdrawal of ESA for many recipients of which it is a total necessity and lifeline. Their destruction of this benefit is damaging the most vulnerable in you borough. Any further withdrawal of help for these people is a vicious, heartless assault against disabled and vulnerable people

who are extremely reliant on the compassion of society.

- Why do they have to be in the support group?
- People who are receiving benefits should be living in the UK full time if they can afford to leave the UK why are they receiving benefits - no they should not be paid.
- They may be ill & unable to attend a support group
- The children are already here. I do not understand q3.
- Again, difficult to answer without knowing figures of people claiming etc. If the means test is adequate the right people should be helped - however, I would like to see all the people making the rules and regulations have to live a month of basic job seekers allowance to see how they fare!
- Support should be paid to all claimants living on benefits
- Question 3 makes no sense unless you understand what the Support Group is. Again, no context or explanation, so how can we answer this?
- This is a very dictatorial approach, you cannot dictate to people how they should live their lives, nor should we discourage increased birth rates, we need young people to support an ageing population, and with the number of women having less or no children at all, this gap needs to be filled.
- Generally those on ESA (like a family member of mine) are very in need of support in other areas, particularly finances and tax. The term 'support group' is incredibly vague, what does this even refer to? This questionnaire feels more misleading the further I go through it, is it designed to get the answers that the council wants? Or to gauge ACTUAL opinion?
- The 'devil is the detail': customers absent from Britain not eligible for this benefit. Ineligibility after being absent from UK for a few days or months?
- The council seems to be looking for reasons not to provide support, which is wrong.
- The council should not discriminate against families who have more than two children. If people are in receipt of Employment Support Allowance then they should also receive assistance towards their council tax.
- I do not see the logic of either supporting 2 children or unlimited children. Why can't you apply a means tested approach to each case, as you do in many other areas, to determine the most appropriate level of support?
- 1 - No child should be penalised.
2 - ESA recipients should receive additional help, as they are on very low incomes
- Why should others work hard and subsidise people who choose not to work? People who really need help, should be prioritised.

- ESA is hard to live on for most people!
- Don't understand the third statement as I take it if they are receiving ESA then they would also need Housing support to pay the rent and then also, the council tax.
- All those in receipt of esa are very low income in comparison with others in the borough and so deserve help if they need it.
- The support group receives more money and why should they be treated any different. They are still classed as being on a low income.
- I feel if someone leaves GB they should not be allowed to apply for anything from GB, regardless of their situation, this country is overrun by people working the system, it's time that GB woke up to this.
- All of these are terrible ideas.
- It should be open to anyone
- Why only limit help to the Support Group? A Dickensian action!
- 1. If the applicant has left UK temporarily such that they are still required to pay council tax, then the support should remain. If someone has been away over a year, then is that still considered temporary? I'd imagine long term temporary absences were rare by definition, so changing it would be unlikely to recoup much funds vs. the cost of implementation. I'd like to see the relevant data. If it's worth changing on a cost basis, then that implies there would be an impact. But I can't imagine which group would be affected (given it has to be a group that was eligible for CTS in the first place).
 2. All children should be covered. Limiting it to two is arbitrary, and with an aging population we want to do all we can to encourage larger families. We certainly don't want any policies that discourage larger families.
 3. I would expect ESA to be treated as a form of income, and the assessment made on that basis. That would be consistent with the goals of the universal credit, by removing a potential inconsistency between income derived from welfare awards vs. income derived from employment. E.g. if ESA income was replaced by the same amount of employment income then the CTS award should not change.
- I don't know what employment support allowance is or what the Support Group is, so how am I meant to fairly answer this question?
 1. There should be no support for customers who leave GB, if they can afford to travel they should be paying their CT.
 2. There should be no support for any children, having children is a choice, why should anyone else have to pay towards that.
 3. No additional assistance should be provided for anyone.
- The people who decided who qualified for the support group was a scandal. The company in charge was sacked by the government. As such this should be looked at sympathetically.
- Those in receipt of Employment Support Allowance should receive additional assistance regardless of the group they are in. Some people have waited for their assessment to be assigned to the support group for up to a year (and remain on

the lower assessment rate during this period). Lack of assistance for people in this position would be punitive.

- I do not have enough information to know whether this would be right.
- 2. The size of your family should not be means tested unless you advocate limiting the number of children allowed in a family, let's hope not.
3. More information needed on what ESA and support groups are to be able to answer properly.
- I do not know what the 'support group ' is
- I do not understand question 4. What is the support group?
- I think that policy needs to be more flexible to meet needs of the most vulnerable e.g. those with more children or those with other needs in addition to employment support allowance
- I think a limit of two children is too low. Why 2?
Why penalise those in receipt of ESA ?
- As stated above, families in need are more numerous and their situation increasingly difficult.
The suggestion that children who happen to have been born into larger families should be directly financially penalised is particularly distasteful victim-blaming. Every child in Bromley has human rights - not just those in 1- or 2- child families.
- Due to constant benefit cuts and inadequate work capability assessments ESA applicants are often left with no other income, thus unable to pay for council tax and cover other basic expenses. I therefore think that council tax assistance should be available to all people on ESA.
- If you leave the country for a holiday you don't need tax support.
If you have more than 2 children would you really expect the public to fund the fruits of your loins.
- Exceptions to families with more than two children who receive tax credits are unfair on the hardworking families who do not receive tax credits. There should be one rule for all families with more than two children.
Not all customers in receipt of ESA want to or have time to be in a support group.
- See my previous answer
- I don't know what this is.
- All these allowances should be stopped.
- It should be voluntary to be a member of a support group, recommended not compulsory
- In some cases ESA is all people have and I think it unfair to lump them all into one group
- I think the support should cover up to 4 children. 2 is less than needed to maintain

the population and unlimited is not appropriate

- the ESA assessments are biased and there is enough evidenced of this
- It depends on the individual circumstances e.g. temporary disability.
- Q. 2 How many children there are is the parents responsibility.
- Q2, they do not understand the question so cannot comment.
Those not in the support group are paid nearly £37 less per week so should also receive the assistance.
- I had to pay full council tax when I was working when I had an accident and was not able to work I was told I had to pay council tax. I even had the bailiff get me out of bed because they were told I did not qualify for council tax support.
- He does not understand question 3.
- Council tax support should be offered to working age adults who have contributed for over 20 years but are going through exceptional hardship/changes in life.
- If customers leave the borough they should not receive any monies. Family with children get childrens allowance according to the amount of children they have ie: 2-4-6-8.
- What is a support group? How do you expect me to answer this question without this detail.
- If they want the kids then they should be made to keep them. The population and birth rate is escalating because we are paying them to have them ridiculous! I don't understand the last question. ESA get a job, every high street has got shops with notices for staff they are given too much help so don't want to take jobs. If you didn't work in my young da you would get nothing so took any job.
- Families with more than two children should not be penalised.
- I don't know what the implications of this question are
- WE cannot afford to live on £100.00 + per week and be expected to pay all our utility bills.
- No because this is effectively a reduction in benefits which these people need to get assistance in their daily lives.
- I have insufficient knowledge of this issue to express an opinion.
- Q2, only because it's not clear, what will happen to the unpaid for children in case of hardship, what are the provisions? If none, my answer remains.
Q3, Because how will people get a job if they end up homeless because of this? ESA doesn't cover rent in most places, let alone a London borough, this is a stupid idea, think again.
- Q3, not sure what this means.

- Q2, 3 children.
- No because ESA is so little money people on it struggle to get food and pay utility bills, therefore cannot afford to pay a contribution to council tax.
- I question the purpose of such a support group.
- They may not have access/knowledge of the support group E.g. mental health/learning difficulties/elderly/other.
- would have thought anyone on ESA would have been entitled to additional assistance
- Again, are these changes going to cause hardship for some people.
- Do not understand Q3, who is the support group.
- No I don't think that's right. If you are low waged it is very hard.
- What is employment support? What is the support group?
- Not sure what additional assistance means but all will seem to need all assistance they can get.

Q5 Are there any other changes you would like to see to the Council Tax Support scheme 2018/19 or any further comments you would like to make regarding the scheme?

- more open access to how money is spent
- There needs to be a tightening up of abusers to the scheme.
- Make better surveys. Also, reducing support to Council tax claimants who need it just increases personal debt and leads to more expensive problems down the line, including burdens on the NHS and other services due to health issues from not eating properly, and stress-related illnesses. Is it too much to ask for a Government that isn't obsessed with short-term "let them hang" financial accounting magnitude? Apparently it is.
- There should be a panel of residents elected to oversee the fund to ensure our money is being spent wisely.
- Full consideration of Universal Credit roll out impact and review of administration coats against current and proposed CTRS options.
- Make the scheme easier to understand, very confusing at times so much paperwork.
- People should be allowed to live in dignity, and they should be encouraged to save. People on low income could be encouraged to save through Credit Unions.
- I would like the council tax rates looked at. I live in a 1 bedroom flat and pay the same rate as my neighbour who is in a 2 bedroom/2 bathroom flat. Big difference in value

and floor space and yet I am paying the same rate. This cannot be right.

- Yes for those that are on a low income charge them accordingly in regards to the charges for council tax.
- Ensure that it goes to the right people. I realise it's difficult to seek out the genuine against the drama queens, but I think adding in items like support groups is a good idea, it shows a willingness to improve or do better, and also helps peoples wellbeing because they have something to do.
- There should be no Council Tax Support at all.
- It should be more widely publicised.
- Instead of creating the illusion of paying the council tax, support those on low or zero income in getting apprenticeships within the local community. If they fail to make it work 3 times, then Strike 3 and you are out.
- I still believe that bins should be collected every week in the summer as it has more of a bad smell and we have lots of flies and foxes around.
- Increase payable portion to 30%
- Someone (like me) would prefer one simple notification of what their paying, rather than several sheets of confused paperwork.
- I think it's wrong to cut any help people get with council tax. There's so much to find every month and it's a struggle every day to pay to live. Anyone claiming the CT support needs to show proof if not working, and if they are working then that's good and they should still get help if earning less than 1500. Help should be provided for more than just 2 children per household and for people who are elderly, ill or disabled as they struggle also.
- Scrap it!
- As in any scheme dealing with vulnerable people many of whom have chaotic life styles and are not capable of managing daily life tasks there needs to be an element of discretion in awarding "hardship" payments.
- Bromley are doing this better than most other London Boroughs
- More support should be made for single working people living in their own. 25% reduction is not enough!
- I do not have enough knowledge of the scheme to make a comment
- It would be helpful to know what the percentage of claimants versus people who pay full council tax? Without this knowledge you are asking people to give you answers to questions without the full facts. This renders the consultation a waste of time and money.
- No, it seems reasonable to me.
- I repeat my previous comment that discretionary financial support should not be a local

government function.

- The collection should be payable by the end of the year allowing the poorest to be able to catch up payments without a threat of a Bailiff letter if paid later in the month.
- It should be made more available. I did not know about it until I received this email and therefore I have set up my account to pay it for the year. It would have been nice to know that support was an option.
- Genuine cases require help. Have you enough staff and resources to weed out the fakers and non-genuine cases
- More people should be eligible for help I work 2 jobs am £1600 in debt but apparently not entitled to any help at all
- Abolish the scheme.
- Everyone over 16 should be made to pay full council tax (unless they are single and living alone) because they all benefit from the council's services, paid by us all.
- Be given a minimum and a maximum limit for help with the council tax support and who is actually entitled to the support.
- Help people that need help. Stop being so mean and penny pinching.
- The questions in this survey have a very political slant and seem to be designed to win support for hurting the most vulnerable in our society. That's a shame because carrying out this consultation is an excellent idea and the subjects in question deserve serious discussion and debate.
- If you are a pensioner with a small private pension you should get support
- Support single occupancy - the 25% discount isn't enough
- The CTS scheme should help those who really need it, but possibly be reduced to 70%. Larger families (who are probably using more Council services pro rata) could contribute/pay more.
- People moving into the area and living here under 2 years shouldn't receive the benefit. Council should verify right to abode in UK before providing support.
- I would like to see it reduced or remain at the same level.
I would also like to see the enforcement of recycling and less in collections to save council tax money, I also think the council should take more robust action on fly tipping around Essex Tower.
- All should be means tested based on real income, real costs of childcare and real costs of private rent and other utility bills. any cuts re childcare or rent gives completely disillusioned view on the real hardships people are having and very often push people out of employment as you can be better off not working, but claiming benefits instead.
- We should curtail the great benefits hand out and Bromley Council should lead on this. The Chinese do not do it and think we are complete and utter idiots. The system encourages people not to take FULL responsibility for themselves. It pays people to be

lazy and breed like rabbits. It is an absolute disgrace.

- A fair share contribution by all to Council Tax.
- there should be a payment card scheme in place as people have not got the extra to pay at HSBC
- Those who recycle more should be rewarded and those who don't recycle should be penalised.
- Empty households should pay 500 o/o
If empty for 6 weeks
- Stripping back of non-essential services provided with a view to securing a reduction in council tax to non-claimants of benefit.
Reduction of benefits available to claimants, generally.
- The council needs to make further strenuous efforts to resolve its funding issues with central government.
- It would be very much to the credit of Bromley, a prosperous borough, to be as generous as possible to its poorer citizens whenever it can.
- Do not have sufficient knowledge of Bromley accounts to comment on the finances.
- As a more privileged resident of Bromley, I am keen to see my less well-off neighbours provided for fairly.
- I would suggest a complete revision on council tax policy, without limiting it to a single component. It seems a lot more may be done in using the existing funds more efficiently, for instance in dealing with contractors. Talking about raising taxes is not appropriate before all avenues to use existing funds more efficiently have been treaded, and evidence supplied to the residents.
- Temporary support for marital breakdown where a partner leaves the home and disrupts the income, in particular where children remain with the partner claiming.
- It's a good idea as long as it is not abused
- Your administration of the system needs to be overhauled since it is inefficient and often inaccurate. Documentation is frequently lost requiring applicants to resubmit information. Some phone calls are not entered on to the system. Applicants frequently receive several letters, sometimes on the same day, giving conflicting information which is confusing for them and must necessitate extra work for the council.
- Single OAP occupants should have their council tax reduced by 50%, not just 25%
- People that can't pay should be made to work to keep the borough clean & tidy
- Things like the hardship fund are not published clearly so I did not know of it. Residents claiming benefits should be means tested to see if they qualify as standard if they are unable to work.
- When the spouse of a council tax payer dies the council tax should be halved.

- I don't know sufficiently enough about it to provide an informed decision
- The scheme as such works, it's just the level at which low income residents are expected to pay from low income. This then has a knock on effect the following year, where residents find themselves paying a liability recovered amount in addition to the current year, only for this to then go over to the following year. How this works out cheaper for the Council, I have no idea. More bailiff action, more recovery action, inflexible recovery action. These all go to give the Council a bad name, and cause extreme hardship for residents. It's a no win situation for everybody.
- Don't know why it exists at all! It most definitely should not be extended
- Take advantage of the revisiting to simplify if possible the scheme guidance for customers, entitlement calculations, and any exemptions or 'top ups' or such like. Brevity and focus help all, as does equity and uniformity over actual levels of aid. Customers should be less confused.
- Avoid increasing the Council Tax further, as it is already very high and above most other councils. Salary inflation makes it very hard for most working families. If the council tax was cheaper and possibly lowered, less families would require Council Tax support.
- Support must remain to be conditional on those receiving it being seen to actively work to improve their circumstances. This would be a win for everybody, if it can be achieved.
- abolish it
- It is far too complicated.
- The council needs to make changes to reflect increase costs, even if the level of support decreases by 1% when costs would have increased way above this figure
- greater support of the Bromley + Credit Union to assist distressed residents
- I would like to see people on JSA have to pay less than 25% as they are already on an impossibly low income.
- Ensure measures are taken to check individuals who require support are appropriately identified and supported until no longer needed. Individuals leaving the UK should have support withdrawn immediately. Support should strive to make families self-sufficient once more.
- no, as long as the most vulnerable are protected
- Except in exceptional circumstances people have to learn to cut their cloth accordingly
- I believe the government should offer more financial help to families, especially ones who genuinely need it.
- Yes I think if people are genuinely in need of assistance they should be supported but we should also ensure that people then can do things in some way that benefit the rest of the community who are having to pay the full tax. Everyone has skills that can be utilised in some way or another.

- They need to help disabled people more and single parents (who are genuinely single parents and struggling to make ends meet on a low income under £16,000)
- Back to 100% support for the poor
- Glad to be consulted
- Given the increase in food prices and rent as well as the increase in inflation it would seem to me only right that the subsidy should remain the same at the very least. The council should make greater efforts to lobby the government on this and other issues related to hardship.
- As someone who is now retired, but not yet at state pension age for another 5 years, my income is borderline, as I only receive income from an occupational pension. The cost of my council tax at 100% liability is a huge expense to me, and makes a significant difference to what I have left out of my residual income. I therefore would like to see my council tax cost decrease, by reducing the level of support for others. I feel I have subsidised others for far too long now, and as one who is now on a borderline income, I feel it is only fair that people like myself no longer have to subsidise others any longer. Reducing my council tax cost will help me manage my financial commitments a lot better.
- As above in my responses.
- Scrap it.
- You have not explained what the support scheme is
- People with disabilities who are unable to work should be the only people to get any help
- Fines after 4 weeks for not declaring change if circumstances
- More rigour during means testing
- Working families should get more support
- A general point: I do not like Bromley to pride itself on having '2nd lowest Council Tax in London' or whatever it might be. This Borough is a great place to live and has some well-off residents. It should pride itself on providing excellent quality services, especially for those residents who are not so well-off.
- As part of the consultation the actual cost and projected cost of proposals should be clearly stated.
- Those that continually cause problems for others should have assistance removed.
- I don't believe full council tax paying residents should incur further increases or cuts to services simply to offer additional support for those not paying the full share.
- Council tax should rise exponentially with the number of houses owned by individuals.
- I am not fully conversant with who gets 75% towards their Council Tax, so difficult for me to comment. As a single occupant, I get a 25% discount. Taking away any

benefits is bound to cause hardship to those who need it most.

- Maybe rather than a flat 75% reduction, there should be a sliding scale?
- I think long term residents who take action to keep their area litter free should receive a small discount. A reduction should also be given to people who always vote in elections. This would encourage those who are apathetic, and never vote
- I hope that disabled people and people with mental health issues get the support they need
- If we reduced the amount of councillors there would be more money available
- Have nothing to say on this point.
- People too lazy to work and being on benefits since school leavers should get less support. They are the ones who need to pay money into the country
- Regular reassessment of claimants
- I think people on higher rate disability benefits should pay more council tax or get less benefit as they use the services more and get more than the average person, I had a friend who is on higher rate and still has money to spare for going on holidays, buying take-aways and keeping her obese enough so she don't have to work, it's not fare on the people trying to do the right thing.
- Assistance should be reduced to 50%
- I would like to see the council tax support scheme increase the support from 75% to at least 90% or preferably 100%.
- Decrease the funds allocated to this scheme and the Council tax value.
- I believe in social and economic justice and I want my council to uphold those values. This is a wealthy borough - let those of us who can afford to do so support those in hardship by paying proportionally more.
- make sure that there are no fraudulent claims, by rigorous application of the rules
- If a borough resident is not living in the borough for a fixed period of time, then the full charge of Council Tax should be put on that resident. Those with a mental or physical disability or have both should have reduced council tax, where proven by medical experts. Families with more than two children should be exempt.
- Assistance to those with very low income and in work
- As per earlier, realign tax to wealth in a fair way to the poor.
- Just because people's wages are over the set limit does not make them well off. We all struggle with bills & life... Disability help should also be a factor
- I don't mind paying more council tax if rubbish bags could be collected weekly in the summer months. I am fed up of cleaning maggots out of my outside bun every 2 weeks!!

- Could you fund an increased support pot via a tax on landlords, strictly not to be passed onto tenants? I say this as a landlord myself & recognising I am privileged to own an additional property...
- Reduce the tax and make everyone pay their fair share the council will probably have move money at terms off it all
- Bromley already charge enough!! Instead of penalising the number of children (3/4 only not 2) stop paying too high salaries and cut council waste and note my previous comments. Take note of how other councils charging less. Charge more for the higher paid maybe!!
- do no increase council tax
- Reduction for pensioners
- By making things too easy for some others end up struggling. things need to be made fairer
- Remove unnecessary benefits to wealthy pensioners
- The whole council tax need to be review, as stated a pay as you use scheme, for all working age adults.
- Yes - I would like to see the scheme provide more support to those who are vulnerable (many through no fault of their own)
- I think Bromley Council should revise the support given to retired persons living in the borough as currently I feel they get too much support.
- Staff wages are paid by the people who pay their wages and also contribute to society. NOT all claimants are dishonest. More assistance SHOULD be given and paid for in LESS wage rises for staff Management.
- Council tax is an irrational form of taxation. It should be replaced by a local income tax then council tax support would not be necessary
- I think the bedroom tax should be abolished
- I don't feel I know enough to comment
- The council should look at cutting back on its own employment, wage structure and where its services are not being used cost effectively.
- Extra tax per child. An actual "Green Tax"
- No comment, I have no experience or knowledge of the scheme, nor am I likely to.
- It sound like a Blair-ite scam to get people to take a decision on a whim, without giving them and evidence either way.
Lots of people will vote to persecute the poor and think they've saved themselves some money, but it's just political manipulation.
Tom Paine wrote about hereditary kings being as sensible as hereditary mathematicians, but he just avoided explaining why an elected mathematician would

be any better, when most people have some difficulties working out percentages. It's the same with most issues, and it's disgraceful that the council should be pushing the decision onto uninformed ordinary voters. The same "good" will come of it that came with Blair (which party was he ???)

- I think clarity on how it works and who it is for would be helpful - easily accessible information.
- I think there should be bands which decide the level of support. Some can get more support and others less support than the current 75%, depending on their circumstances.
- Reduced council tax for people trying to get on the housing ladder.
- I would like it to be fairer, make the rich pay more to help out the needy
- All support schemes need constant review to ensure you are helping those who need it
- More money, less hoops to jump through. Those young adults that have been supported by the Council Children's services to be covered fully for their council tax until they can fully support themselves in the outside world.
- I feel that people with on-going disabilities should receive 100% council tax support. I've been unable to pay mine due to not having enough money to live & my anxiety disorder stops me contacting any authorities. I therefore am hounded by enforcement officers racking the original bill up over 200 a time. I can't cope
- Why does this survey refer to residents as "customers". You're not running a business.
- The old system was much fairer
- Increase the amount payable to a minimum of 40% but allow people affected to pay over an extended time, say 3 years.
- I think it is important to support working people in need as much as we support pensioners. It increases the chance that those individuals will continue to work and continue to contribute to the economy.
- Refer to comments already made about employers relying too much on their employees getting government support for council tax and many other benefits. For many people, who are not 'scroungers', these benefits are a humiliation. Clearly, there are circumstances when benefits are essential, but they should not be the norm.
- I'd like to know how it compares to other similarly 'wealthy' boroughs and whether the scheme is currently working for those in need or whether it is making their situation worse.
- Invest in training for mature people, it's hard to find employment when you're in your 50's.
- Council should reconsider funding some services, should charge companies running services on its behalf- like Mytime that has huge profits. Increase business rate
- Make it more productive - people should be incentivised to work.
If the council is subsidising council tax or providing relief in another form then the

citizens should be helping the council maintain the levels of facilities by providing voluntary hours and work. There should be no exception on this.

- I think that those on ESA, DLA and/or PIP should not have to pay any council tax or at most a maximum of £10 a month.
- There should be a reduction in council tax for 2018/19
- In an ideal world, we would want council to ensure everyone in the borough is having a minimal standard of life. However in this challenging economy, this is not possible. We have to think of the trade-off. If we continue spending so much in the support, spending on other services are going to decrease. My views are that we need to decrease spending on some of the supports so that we can continue spending on education, sports and infrastructure development of our area which will help us in the long run.
- Too much stress. This stress is pushing people be unwell for too long
- Employ people with common sense to look at each individual case rather than pursuing money from people who can ill afford to pay, that have spoken with council tax support to discuss their financial plight only to be hit with debt collection agencies and attachment of earning orders causing many families untold stress
- Special attention should be paid to vulnerable groups such as pensioners & disabled!
- A fairer system to all, not just the rich
- It is a charge that no one wants really wants to pay but the council need monies to run services and maintain their boroughs everyone benefits from this in one way or another (they walk on /use pavements as a minimum) everyone should pay. People on low incomes appear to feel that it is everyone else's issue to pay for them - they should budget their monies and make provisions for the main bill commitments in life before using the monies for wine, cigarettes and SKY TV.
- I am in full time employment and not retired. I think the Council Tax level for sole resident retirees should be reduced to 50% rather than the 75% they currently pay for equality purposes. If a household of 2-5 residents over age 18 pay 100% Council Tax then a sole resident should only pay 50% as their impact on council services, refuse and benefits is significantly less than a full household generating more waste etc. Similarly why should they pay more than people receiving CTS who could be receiving more in benefits than the state pension? It is an unfair system and using pensioners to support the CTS when they can be struggling on their own pension.
- The hardship fund should be better publicised.
- No. Given the current financial situation that the Council finds itself in, I reckon that the current provisions are fair and reasonable.
- I hope you will retain paper claims. Most of the clients I work with are too ill to spend 45 minutes on a phone call making a claim, or do not have access to a computer at home and may not be well enough (mobility issues, shortness of breath, generalised weakness and fatigue and frailty) to get to a library or other support organisation to use a computer there.
- It should only be supplied, where there is genuine hardship, not perceived hardship. If

claimants are out of the country for longer than 4 weeks, all support should be withdrawn.

- I'd like to see this survey done again with proper explanation and statistics included so people can make informed choices when answering the questions. Also, why are pensioners not means tested? If someone over retirement age still has a large income, surely they should be paying the same as the rest of us?
- Backdating should be limited to four weeks only in line with Housing Benefit.
- I pay a ridiculous amount of bills and tax, I can barely afford to feed myself at the end of each month. Yet my 'means tested' salary would suggest I'm not entitled to Council Tax Support. You should take into account the out-goings of people, not just their salaries that are already heavily taxed.
- Customers on the support scheme should only pay 8.5% towards the cost of their council tax.
- I don't get help and struggle to pay the £100, every month why should the out of work have as many kids as they want but I pay for them? cut of at two kids I'm sure then they would work or stop relying on the working full timers to pay for them
- There should be discounts for 2nd home, rather than paying 100% council taxes for both homes.
- Just stop it all together
- Help more with those struggling and stop taking people to court and adding on more money to the bill that we can't pay in the first place. Why don't you just deduct it straight from our benefits?
- Yes, the Minimum Payment should be reduced
Also, Bromley should immediately stop using bailiffs to recover monies owed by CTS claimants, as this simply serves to drive those households even further into debt and risks forcing them into the hands of pay-day lenders or worse
- The scheme should be more generous.
- A greater understanding of the challenges faced by those on limited incomes & more support, particularly for families with young children.
- Fund programs or provide additional assistance for working-age claimants so that they can seek rightful employment thus contributing to the council
- The support should be restricted to one or two children families only and also to single parent families unless one parent is severely incapacitated and unable to work and has been formally assessed as so. There should be no support to any residents who have not lived in the country for 5 years.
- If People like our borough contribute to it.
- The way in which people are chased for payment needs to be less aggressive and far more accommodating. People face many challenges and this is not taken into account - I speak from experience.

- Make it easier for people who earn different amounts each week
- Assessment and re-evaluation of needs must be on-going
- Ensure the support scheme targets those who are eligible, counteract any fraud.
- Lower the amount that full-time single parents have to pay.
- We believe any claimants should do their utter best to contribute to the council and so we agree to reducing the amount of council support.
- It should be monitored and only needing families should get it. All bogus claims must be prosecuted.
- Ensure that it is totally means tested. Extra staff may be required.
- Make it more generous!
- Means test the exemption for pensioners. Areas of Bromley are affluent areas for the rest of the country usually only affordable for older generations such as those that are retired. Giving these people further benefits at the expense of those less well-off is a ridiculous notion.
- Start actually listening to customers rather than asking questions and then ignoring what people say!!!
- yes - the scheme should be abolished
- I am a higher rate tax payer and do not receive any Council Tax Support. I would be very happy to increase my Council Tax contributions in order to ensure that those in need of additional support receive it.
- Can the 75% reduction be increased and what is the actual current cost to the council of this scheme?
- Only the users of services should pay for them. We currently have a system where some pay, (those who work), and some use, those who work, and those who don't, and never shall, because their lives are supported by tax payers. Again, the users should pay, and be registered, and, those who opt-out, should pay, too: but only when they use the service.
- I would like to see a reduction in such support schemes and more investment in schools, public transport services, social services and other public services
- Council tax is a complete nonsense basing what you pay on the size of your accommodation. Assuming every household in the borough consisted of two parents (working) and two children then fair enough but life isn't like that. I am of working age, but disabled and live on my own but yet my bill is disproportionately high. You put too much focus on "working age adult". It should be based on if you can work. I have spent years jumping through hoops with DWP proving my health and they agree I can't work. So if you are in the ESA Support Group and getting Severe Disability Premium then that should be good enough for you to go ahead and give 100% council tax benefit. I have no way of improving my circumstances. If I was a layabout and chose not to work, then I agree, make them pay! But there should be some mercy shown for people who can't work and struggle on basic disability benefits. The 25% you expect me to

pay is a huge chunk of my income and totally disproportionate to people who do work.

- Making sure money is going to really needed people researched properly
- All Councils should adopt financial measures to encourage families to have a maximum of two children, in line with policy of 'Population Matters' Charity (Patron Sir David Attenborough) and the U.N.
- This is clearly a contentious subject. Can it be reserved for those that are resident in the Borough and have not just fetched up on the doorstep.
- A more flexible approach to meeting needs of the vulnerable and those that need it.
- It's right that we offer support. However, support must be consistent with wider context, and in the case of people no longer resident in the UK, I see no moral basis for it.
- Direction given to Council staff to assess all cases with a strong focus on dignity, respect and support for families in need.
- Council tax support scheme should include those who are in temporarily accommodation.
- A general reduction in the costs of support.
- I think there should be more help for single people who work fulltime but are on a low income. The 25% discount is not enough in some instances. It should also take into account their outgoing. Some, in private accommodation pay an extortionate rent.
- When monthly payments missed & you then demand the rest of the years council tax bill to be paid or a court order & extra costs are added to the bill even though the year isn't over till the following April I think this is ridiculous & puts unnecessary pressure on people who are struggling to pay their bills in the first place have had this happen to me & it's very intimidating & stressful when you can't afford the extra costs ...
- Not really, just to say that somehow the system must only support the most needy and not those who could get help but don't need the full support available.
- Reduce council tax for those who are working hard to live their life. They are not working to feed alcoholic, offenders, criminals, abusers and lazy ones.
- Reduce more for single parents who do work
- Reduce council tax for workers
- Generally, I feel strongly that those who are less able to look after themselves through disability, mental health or unemployment should be protected. No-one wants to give such people additional worries. However, if a family is working maybe there should be some sort of sliding scale of contributions depending on their circumstances.
- I was on council tax benefit and because I got a few hours extra it became a nightmare to continue. The restrictions have gone too far for those like me still on a low wage.
- Please do surveys and how happy the council tax payers are happy with the services provided by the council. I have never been asked to do so in all the time I have been

living in this property. Thanks

- Helping people to get a bigger house when families grow. I have a small 2 bed house and need a 3 bed as I have 2 girls in one room and my son in with me and my husband.
- People need all the help they can get.
- Yes, there arises the question of valuation of premises which, frankly is a mess and fragmented. I am aware of such a case where the property is occupied by a disabled person is certainly in the wrong c/tax bracket.
- Understanding support is for those who need, and that the council is doing all it can to help. But cannot spend what it doesn't have.
- Councils waste a lot of their yearly budgets. I hear Bromley spends 1 million in Flowers, plants, etc. yearly.
- If people living on a low income and working things should remain the same. People earning a certain amount should have their council tax increased to compensate money needed for this vital service.
- Council tax support is much appreciated, but I am in a genuine situation (not of my own making) and have paid council tax or equivalent for over 35 years. The monthly £19 is tough to find.
- As before, people should pay their own way, I have to!
- I don't know what the support group is? Assistance should only be available to the genuinely unwell and those suffering short term hardship/illness such as cancer or unable to pay.
- I do not think the council and rate payers should be eligible for government policy.
- Reduce spending to balance your books. We are citizens not customers.
- You stop it altogether as a hairdresser I know tells me he is grateful to the benefits as they keep him in work he said a lot of them have their hair done twice a week then leave his shop and then go over to the tanning shop and most of them never worked. You are helping them to live this lifestyle.
- Release figures on how many people apply for the hardship fund and how many fail to get support because funding has run out.
- Review & re-assess all customers in receipt of the scheme- circumstances may have changed.
Review & re-negotiate all external council contracts-etc. services & landscapes cosmetics by third party
- My wife still works and is age 70, is the current scheme for her at pensionable age. Our neighbours are of pension age and are out of work and receiving council tax support and having a better lifestyle like holidays. Is the current scheme maintained correctly?

- For ourselves we are perfectly happy with the present agreement
- They should advise people better on the help they can receive.
- Even when I myself was out of work for 6 months, no-one wanted to help me. People come over to this country and get help. Ridiculous, so I have no say in your support scheme.
- Need to review perhaps cost effective of certain services and service providers.
- Look at all your services. Increase all bills by a small amount then decrease all benefits you pay out by a small amount. Match it to your deficit. Use common sense and make pragmatic changes rather than politically driven ones. Ideology that is fixed is the enemy of reason.
- Low council tax for single pensioners.
- Pay less council tax, as we pay too much and we don't see the results.
- Reduce my personal council tax as I also struggle to pay £170 each month! Talking others in other countries this is an extreme price.
- More support to low income families and single parents in particular.
- I am not familiar with any council tax support scheme that is in place, so it can be quite hard for me to have a say on it. Maybe more information regarding this scheme could have been sent with this questionnaire to help those understanding it more and make a fair comment.
- Support should be given to those in genuine need especially those that are disabled and the elderly. Support should not be given to those who can work but choose not to. Families on benefits who have multiple children should not expect additional support but single parents with young children should be treated fairly. Families where children are older than 12 months should be expected to have employment. Some families should not be entitled to additional support.
- No raising any further! The amount of increase through the years seems disproportionate i.e. 8.5% 13/14 - 19% 14/15 - 25% 16/17
- People on benefits should pay council tax every other year.
- I would still prefer to see the national scheme back. You are now seeing different levels of support in different areas which is a bit unfair.
- Some who are capable of working could help on council projects
- I feel if your low wage and single parent you should get more discount.
- You are already doing your best to continue to be the best in the whole of the UK.
- I would like to decrease council tax
- People on low income should get more council tax support