

Online questionnaire Webpage

Local Council Tax Support – have your say

Many people on low incomes can get Council Tax Benefit to help them pay their Council Tax bill. Although residents make the claim through their local council, the money for the scheme comes from the Government.

The Government has decided to replace Council Tax Benefit with a new local Council Tax Support scheme from 1 April 2013. Each council is expected to put a new local scheme in place to support working age people and pensioners.

The new scheme must protect pensioners. This means most pensioners will continue to get the same level of support that they had under the Council Tax Benefit scheme. *(Insert link to the Draft Council Tax Reduction Schemes ((Prescribed Requirements)) Regulations).*

Council funding is made up of various grants from central Government as well as from Council tax. The Government funds 100% of the current Council Tax Benefit scheme which is about £19 million for Havering this year. Next year, the Government will only contribute 90% towards the new local Council Tax Support scheme. This means Havering's funding will be reduced by approximately £1.9 million in 2013-14. There may be other changes to our funding which may have impacts on services but this consultation is seeking views on this area of funding only.

The Council's budget does not cover the 10% reduction in funding; so we need to consider how we could cover this funding gap, either through:

- Saving this amount from the new scheme by changing some of the rules to Council tax benefits and reviewing the current exemptions.
- Increasing Council Tax (£1.9m equates to about a 1.75% increase in Council Tax)
- Change other Council Services because of this shortfall in funding
- A combination of the above.

We have designed a new Council Tax Support scheme which we would like your views on.

More information on the Council's proposed Council Tax Support scheme is available here. *(Link to document "the Council Tax Support proposed draft scheme").*

Complete consultation questionnaire now. *(Link to questionnaire, see below from page 3 onwards).*

Consultation – have your say...

Getting Information in Your Language or another Format (*Link to translations*)

The consultation starts on Thursday 4 October 2012 and ends on Wednesday 14 November 2012.

Please don't miss this opportunity to give us your views on what the local scheme for working age people will look like.

What happens to the information I provide?

The information you provide will be used by the Council to help decide what the scheme will look like.

Later in the year, the results from the consultation will be available on our website for you to read. The final decision on the scheme will be made by the Council no later than 30 January 2013.

Start of Online questionnaire

(*Page 1 of survey*)

Local Council Tax Support Consultation

We would like you to help shape our scheme. Please complete the following questionnaire to give us your views

The consultation closes on 14 November 2012.

With the understanding that...

1. Pensioners are not affected by this scheme; they will get the level of support prescribed in the draft regulations published by the Department for Communities and Local Government called Localising support for council tax - Draft Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations.
2. Some people who are of working age and in receipt of Council Tax Support will be asked to pay more towards their Council Tax bill.
3. If these proposed changes are implemented this will not change other Council services and Council Tax will not need to be increased to cover this reduction in national funding.

.....please answer the following questions.

Draft

Principle: Local authorities will be expected to manage the 10% reduction in subsidised expenditure.

The Council needs to make up a shortfall of £1.9million to meet Government changes to the way it funds council tax. This could be done by reviewing current exemptions from Council tax that currently apply and by changing some of the rules about who qualifies for Council Tax benefits.

Currently some second homes are exempt from Council tax, this could be used to fund most of the proposed shortfall rather than by raising the Council Tax on all properties across the borough.

Question 1 Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

Currently people who own or rent a second property regardless of its purpose can claim a 10% Council Tax Discount.

Question 2 Should people who own or rent more than one property be able to claim council tax relief from the council?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

People who own properties undergoing major repair or structural alteration can receive 100% Council Tax exemption for up to 12 months.

Question 3. Should properties undergoing repairs be eligible for Council Tax relief?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

Currently unoccupied and unfurnished properties are completely exempt from council tax charges for up to six months, even if the owner owns multiple properties.

Question 4. Should unoccupied and unfurnished properties be eligible for council tax relief?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

At present, when building societies and banks repossess properties, there is a 100% council tax exemption from the Council indefinitely.

Question 5 Should banks and building societies pay Council Tax on properties they repossess?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

Principle: In developing schemes, local authorities should consider incentivising claimants into work.

Havering's proposed local Council Tax Support scheme will restrict the maximum Council Tax Support award to the top of properties banded D, which is currently £28.80 per week, for working age claimants. This means that claimants living in larger properties, banded E to H, would not receive more than £28.80 in Council Tax Support and so will always have some Council Tax to pay.

Question 6 Should working age people who receive Council Tax Support and live in properties banded E to H receive more Council Tax Support than those living in properties banded A to D?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

Under the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme, other adults such as an adult son, daughter, other relative or friend who lives in the claimant's home are expected to contribute to household bills such as Council Tax.

Currently, a claimant's Council Tax Benefit is reduced if the other adult in the household is working. Currently, the reduction can be between £3.30 and £9.90 depending on the other adult's income.

The Council proposes to increase the reduction to between £6.00 and 20.00

Question 7 Should these other adults who are working and living in a household where the council tax payer claims Council Tax Support contribute more towards the Council Tax bill than they do now?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give us your comments:

(Page 4 of survey)

Confidentiality of Responses

Thank you for taking part in this consultation. The information you have given us may be passed to colleagues within London Borough of Havering and published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published consultation report.

All information contained in your response, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By providing personal information for the purposes of the public consultation exercise, it is understood that you consent to its disclosure and publication. If this is not the case, you should limit any personal information provided, or remove it completely. If you want the information in your response to the consultation to be kept confidential, you should explain why as part of your response, although we cannot guarantee to do this.

We will publish the responses to the consultation on our website <http://www.havering.gov.uk> in February 2012. The report will summarise the responses and the action that we will take as a result of them.

Almost done now!

Please take a moment to help us get to know you better and click next.

(Page 5 starts here)

We want to know you better...

... so that we can continue to plan and deliver fair and inclusive services that tailored to your specific needs.

The equalities information you give us will remain strictly confidential and will be u for monitoring purposes only, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

What is your postcode?

Are you... Male Female

What is your age?

Under 18 18 - 24 25 - 34 35 - 44 45 - 54
55 - 64 65 - 74 75 - 84 85 - 89 90+

What is your ethnic group?

A. White

British
Irish
Any other white background
If other, please state below

D. Black or Black British

African
Caribbean
Any other black background
If other, please state below

B. Mixed

White and Black Caribbean
White and Black African
White and Asian
Any other mixed background
If other, please state below

E. Other ethnic group

Arab
Any other ethnic background
If other, please state below

Prefer not to say

C. Asian or Asian British

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Chinese

Any other Asian background
If other, please state below

Is English your first language? Yes No
If no, please specify _____

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No Unsure

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on (a person's) ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

If yes, which of the following best describes your disability? (tick all that apply)

Mobility difficulties (wheelchair user)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental health needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility difficulties (non wheelchair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long-term illness or health condition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sight difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unseen disability (e.g. diabetes, cancer, epilepsy, asthma)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearing difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please specify below	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>		

What is your religion or belief?

Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please state below	
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>		

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual/Straight	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay Man	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay Woman/Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Thank you!

**The Equalities information will be kept strictly confidential and
will be used for monitoring purposes only**

End of Online questionnaire

Draft

This is Havering Council's Localised Council Tax Support Scheme consultation. If you would like to get this document in your language or in another format (large print, Braille, audiotape or easy read), please contact Customer services via email at benefits@havering.gov.uk or on 01708 433996.

Bengali:

এটি হেভারিং কাউন্সিলের সিঙ্গেল ইকুয়ালিটি স্কীম। আপনি যদি এই কাগজটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় অথবা অন্য কোন ফরম্যাটে (বড় অক্ষর, ব্রেইল, অডিওটেপ বা ইজি রীড) চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে ডাইভারসিটি প্রোগ্রাম টিমের সাথে equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk ইমেইল ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করুন অথবা 01708 431269 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

Yoruba:

Èyi ni ilànà idógba lónà kan ti àjo ìgbìmò ti Havering. Tí o bá fé iwé ìrì idí ñkan yí ní èdè re, tàbí ní èyà òmíràn (èyí tí a ko ñláńlá, Braille, ìgbohùn sílè tí a lè túngbó, tàbí tí a lè kà ní ìròrùn), jòwó kàn sí àkójo àwon ènià tí ñse ètò nípa ará orílẹ̀ èdè òtòtò ní orí èro ajákoro kárí ayé equalilityscheme@havering.gov.uk tàbí lórí 01708 431269.

Lithuanian:

Čia yra Havering Savivaldybės Vieną Lygybę Užtikrinanti Sistema .Jeigu jūs norėtumėte gauti šį dokumentą savo kalba ar kitu formatu (stambiu šriftu, Brailio raštu, magnetinėje juostoje, ar lengvai skaitomu raštu) prašome susisiekti su Diversity Programme Team(įvairovės programos Grupe)elektroniniu paštu :equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk arba tel. :01708 431269.

Polish:

Niniejszy dokument zawiera informacje dotyczące programu równości Gminy Havering. Aby otrzymać te informacje w języku polskim lub innym formacie (duży druk, alfabet Braille'a, kasety audio lub łatwy tekst), proszę się skontaktować z Departamentem ds. programu różnorodności wysyłając email na adres equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk lub dzwoniąc pod numer 01708 431269.

Punjabi:

ਇਹ ਹੇਵਰਿੰਗ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੀ ਸਿੰਗਲ ਇਕੁਅਲਿਟੀ ਸਕੀਮ (Single Equality Scheme) ਬਾਰੇ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ/ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਬਣਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ (ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਮੋਟੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਬਰੇਲ (ਨੋਤਰਹੀਣਾਂ ਲਈ), ਸੁਣਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਟੇਪ ਜਾਂ ਇਜ਼ੀ ਰੀਡ), ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਡਾਈਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਟੀਮ ਨੂੰ equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk ਤੇ ਈ-ਮੇਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਂ 01708 431 269 ਉਪਰ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Urdu:

(Havering Council's Single Equality Scheme) یہ بیورنگ کونسل کی واحد مساویت کی پالیسی ہے۔ اگر آپ یہ دستاویز اپنی زبان میں یا کسی اور طرز [بڑی چھپائی، بریل یعنی ابھرے ہوئے حروف، آڈیو ٹیپ پر یا آسانی سے پڑھ سکیے] میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم ڈائورسٹی پروگرام ٹیم سے equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk پر ای میل کے ذریعے Diversity Programme Team سے equalityscheme@havering.gov.uk پر رابطہ کریں۔ 01708 431269