

## Local Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation – executive summary

The Local Council Tax Support Scheme public consultation started on 6th August 2012 and was open until 29th October 2012. The Local Council Tax support scheme consultation consisted of three surveys.

1. Open survey to the public (self selecting). The consultation information booklet and survey were made available online on the council's website. Paper copies were available at libraries and customer service points, at the Council House and Amelia Court. Response 883.
2. Survey to a sample of Council Tax Benefit recipients. Sent by post to a random sample of 5000 benefit recipients. Response 488.
3. Survey to the Bristol Citizens' Panel. Sent to 1863 Citizens' Panellists. Response 658.

The three surveys asked the same questions, and everyone completing them had the same information about the consultation. The reason for running the three surveys was to ensure that everyone who wanted to give their views had the opportunity to, but also to ensure that the views of people in receipt of council tax benefit had their views heard sufficiently and that we had a good response from equalities communities in Bristol.

Total combined response to the three surveys was 2029. As different methodologies were used for the three surveys, the results cannot be combined. The information below gives an overview of the results from the three surveys.

### Options

1st choice preferences from question 1.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Open self selecting survey	37%	27%	42%
CTB recipients sample survey	69%	33%	13%
Citizens' Panel	37%	32%	34%

CTB recipients had a clear preference for option 1. Views of the wider public were split between option 1 and 3 as their first preference.

### Features

% agree (combined Strongly agree and agree)

	Feature 1	Feature 2	Feature 3	Feature 4
Open self selecting survey	61%	57%	63%	59%
CTB recipients sample survey	53%	42%	45%	49%
Citizens' Panel	63%	48%	62%	61%

% disagree (combined Strongly disagree and disagree)

	Feature 1	Feature 2	Feature 3	Feature 4
Open self selecting survey	23%	31%	23%	25%
CTB recipients sample survey	24%	36%	27%	24%
Citizens' Panel	16%	31%	16%	15%

There was a neither agree or disagree option which accounts for the remainder of the responses. More people agreed than disagreed with all 4 features. The least popular was feature 3.

### **Vulnerability criteria**

	Agreement
Open self selecting survey	61%
CTB recipients sample survey	60%
Citizens' Panel	64%

There was broad agreement that the proposed criteria to identify 'vulnerable households' was appropriate.

### **Responses to open ended questions**

Do you feel that any of our proposals will adversely affect particular individuals or groups more than others?

	Yes	No
Open self selecting survey	47%	27%
CTB recipients sample survey	37%	22%
Citizens' Panel	26%	28%

There was a 'Don't know' option which accounts for the remainder of the responses

A large proportion of respondents did feel that the proposals would adversely affect some more than others.

Open ended responses to this question and also question 6 'Please provide any other comments you wish to make about the suggested options and additional features' fell into 8 categories, which were: Low income, Disability, Work, Savings and Savers, Vulnerable, Cuts and government, Children and Families, Pensioners.

Open ended responses for question 7 'If you think that the options do not represent your views or you wish to suggest an alternative proposal, please provide your comments' fell into 7 categories, which were: Council costs and savings, Central government, The rich, Working, Poverty, Fairness and equality, Scheme preferences.

## **Representation of equalities groups**

Equalities monitoring questions were asked in each of the surveys so we can ensure that we are hearing the views of all of Bristol's communities. The surveys achieved a good response from Bristol's equalities communities.