

## **Consultation on the Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2022**

### Introduction

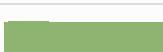
A consultation on the proposals to change the Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2022 was conducted between the 18 August 2021 and the 30 September 2021.

The consultation was advertised via Islington Life, social media channels, latest news bulletins, council website, through our resident support scheme and VCS networks, along with published adverts in the Islington Gazette and Tribune.

Residents were able to complete the consultation online via the council's website. Contact Islington were able to assist anyone to complete the online form to respond to the consultation and a paper copy to respond to the consultation was available on request.

### Summary of responses received

#### **1. Any changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme will be introduced from 1 April 2022. Overall do you agree with increasing the level of support to those of working age through the Council Tax Support Scheme?**

Strongly agree	26.0%		13
Agree	26.0%		13
Neither agree or disagree	14.0%		7
Disagree	10.0%		5
Strongly disagree	20.0%		10
Not sure	4.0%		2
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

### Q1 summary of responses

Overall a majority of respondents, 52%, were agreeable with the general principle of increasing the level of support to those of working age through the Council Tax Support Scheme.

#### **2. Do you agree that the Council should retain the current level of support to working age households capped at 8.5% allowing the Council to invest any available resources in priorities elsewhere?**

Strongly agree	24.0%		12
Agree	36.0%		18
Neither agree or disagree	4.0%		2
Disagree	16.0%		8
Strongly disagree	18.0%		9
Not sure	2.0%		1
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

### Q2 summary of responses

A majority of 60% of respondents agreed with retaining the current level of support to working age households capped at 8.5%.

### **3. Do you agree that the Council should increase support to working age residents by reducing the cap to 5%, thus allowing up to 95% of the support they would have been entitled to under the old council tax benefit rules?**

Strongly agree	12.0%		6
Agree	14.0%		7
Neither agree or disagree	24.0%		12
Disagree	28.0%		14
Strongly disagree	22.0%		11
Not sure	0.0%		0
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

### Q3 summary of responses

There were 26% of respondents agreeable to increase support to working age residents by reducing the cap to 5%, thus allowing up to 95% of the support they would have been entitled to under the old council tax benefit rules. 50% of respondents indicated they disagreed.

### **4. Do you agree that the Council should explore increasing the level of support to working age residents by reducing the cap to 0%, thus allowing up to 100% of the support they would have been entitled to under the old council tax benefit rules.**

**To do this the Council will remove from the Council tax Support scheme the Older Person Discount, the Foster Care Allowance and the Care Leaves/Shared Lives Allowance?**

Strongly agree	12.0%		6
Agree	4.0%		2
Neither agree or disagree	10.0%		5
Disagree	26.0%		13
Strongly disagree	46.0%		23
Not sure	2.0%		1
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

Q4 summary of responses

There were 72% of respondents that disagreed with this proposal.

**5. If you disagree with allowing payment on two homes when a person has left the normal home because of fear of violence, are waiting disability adaptions on the new home and unable to move in until these are carried out or have moved out within the last 4 weeks and still have to pay rent on the old home. Please explain why you disagree.**

Total respondents	<b>13</b>
Respondents who skipped this question	37

Q5 summary of responses

74% of respondents did not disagree with this proposal. Those that directly disagreed with this proposal based on their comments is 6% of respondents.

Comments made to this question are listed in full at Appendix A.

**6. If you disagree with updating the wording of Class 2 within the Council Tax Support Scheme to align it with the Government's gradual increase of the state pension age. Please explain why you disagree.**

Total respondents	<b>6</b>
Respondents who skipped this question	44

Q6 summary of responses

There were 88% of respondents that did not disagree with the proposal. From the comments provided, 6% of respondents directly disagreed with this proposal.

Comments made to this question are listed in full at Appendix A.

## 7. Are there any comments or alternative proposals that you would like to make?

Total respondents	<b>14</b>
Respondents who skipped this question	36

### Q7 summary of responses

72% of respondents did not provide any additional comments or alternative proposals. For the 28% that did complete this section, the comments made to this question are listed in full at Appendix A.

## 8. Do you live in Islington?

Yes	88.0%		44
No	12.0%		6
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

## 9. Are you a council tax payer?

Yes	98.0%		49
No	2.0%		1
Total respondents			<b>50</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			0

## 10. Are you currently receiving Council Tax Support

Yes	22.4%		11
No	77.6%		38
Total respondents			<b>49</b>
Respondents who skipped this question			1

## 11. Gender

Female	51.0%		25
Male	30.6%		15
Non-binary	2.0%		1

Prefer not to say	16.3%		8
		Total respondents	<b>49</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	1

**12. Do you consider yourself to be trans or to have a trans history?**

**Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex and/or gender/which they were assigned at birth**

Yes	2.0%		1
No	74.0%		37
Prefer not to say	24.0%		12
		Total respondents	<b>50</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	0

**13. Are you of working age?**

Yes	80.0%		40
No	20.0%		10
		Total respondents	<b>50</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	0

**14. Are you or your partner in paid employment for more than 16 hours per week?**

Yes	70.0%		35
No	30.0%		15
		Total respondents	<b>50</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	0

**15. How many Children do you have living with you?**

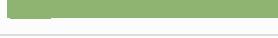
No Children	64.0%		32
1-3 Children	32.0%		16
4 or more children	4.0%		2
		Total respondents	<b>50</b>

	Respondents who skipped this question	0
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### 16. Do you, or does anyone who lives with you, have a disability?

Yes	32.0%		16
No	68.0%		34
Total respondents			50
Respondents who skipped this question			0

### 17. Religion or Belief

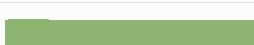
Buddhist	0.0%		0
Christian	34.0%		17
Hindu	0.0%		0
Jewish	0.0%		0
Muslim	4.0%		2
No religion	24.0%		12
Rastafarian	2.0%		1
Sikh	0.0%		0
Other	2.0%		1
Prefer not to say	34.0%		17
Total respondents			50
Respondents who skipped this question			0

### 18. Sexual Orientation

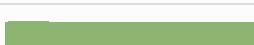
Bisexual	4.1%		2
Heterosexual/Straight	57.1%		28
Gay	8.2%		4
Lesbian	0.0%		0
Prefer not to say	30.6%		15

I use another term, please provide this here	0.0%		0
		Total respondents	<b>49</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	1

## 19. White

British	48.8%		21
Irish	9.3%		4
Turkish/Turkish Cypriot	0.0%		0
Greek/Greek Cypriot	0.0%		0
Kurdish	2.3%		1
Gypsy/Traveller	0.0%		0
Prefer not to say	25.6%		11
Mixed( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
White and black Caribbean( <i>Hidden</i> )	0.0%		0
Any other white background	14.0%		6
		Total respondents	<b>43</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	7

## 20. Mixed

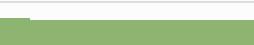
White and black Caribbean	10.0%		1
White and black African	0.0%		0
White and Asian	10.0%		1
Prefer not to say	80.0%		8

Any other Mixed background	0.0%		0
		Total respondents	<b>10</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	40

## 21. Asian or Asian British

Indian	0.0%		0
Pakistani	0.0%		0
Bangladeshi	0.0%		0
Chinese	0.0%		0
Prefer not to say	100.0%		8
Any other Asian background	0.0%		0
		Total respondents	<b>8</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	42

## 22. Black or Black British

Caribbean	30.8%		4
Somali	7.7%		1
Eritrean	0.0%		0
Nigerian	7.7%		1
Ghanaian	0.0%		0
Other African	0.0%		0
Prefer not to say	53.8%		7
Any other Black background	0.0%		0
		Total respondents	<b>13</b>
		Respondents who skipped this question	37

## 23. Other Ethnic Groups

Arab	11.1%		1
Latin American	11.1%		1

Prefer not to say	77.8%	<div style="width: 77.8%; background-color: #6aa84f; height: 10px;"></div>	7
Any other background	0.0%	<div style="width: 0%; background-color: #6aa84f; height: 10px;"></div>	0
Total respondents		<b>9</b>	
Respondents who skipped this question			41

It should be noted that for questions 19 to 23, we were unable to set the questionnaire up so that once you had provided an answer you move past the remaining questions. You could opt to skip the questions that did not apply to you. The answers suggest some respondents have answered affirmatively in more than one category.

## **Appendix A**

**5. If you disagree with allowing payment on two homes when a person has left the normal home because of fear of violence, are waiting disability adaptions on the new home and unable to move in until these are carried out or have moved out within the last 4 weeks and still have to pay rent on the old home. Please explain why you disagree.**

### Answers in full

3	I do not disagree
6	Am exemption can be brought in using local powers available in a similar manner to downsziers exemptions
8	The burden of proof that true entitlement exists may be difficult and could be abused.
17	I believe the rules should remain the same with the council to be a right to waiver at times for the odd case but only at times and for a short period.
19	N/A
21	There should be NO payment on two homes. The council tax is high enough as it is.
22	Its wrong to not support people in these times
31	No comments.
34	The length of time that people are required to make duplicate payments should be reduced to a minimum to keep costs down.
38	These issues should be resolved as quickly as possible. If you are supporting all these residents - who is paying for it. Everyone uses these services and everyone should be contributing to them. I don't know where you get the money to cover all the support.

39	I agree with this provision. The council however should come down harder on private landlords who leave their home empty more than two months.
45	In practice, the abuser is effectively receiving council support. Albeit I do not object support to the victim, I don't feel our tax money should be used to fund abusers and the council should make provisions to recover the benefit given to abusers.
50	If leaseholders can afford to buy their homes from LBI , they are going to make a lot of profit when they sell to whoever. I find by experience , leaseholders get on TRA 's and block any improvements to Social Housing properties = leaseholders will pay a % for any improvements , therefore they will block improvements for poorer residents . There really needs to be an investigation about the prospects of leaseholders taking over TRA 's in our Borough just to block improvements for poorer residents. It happened under Homes for Islington and increasingly now.

**6. If you disagree with updating the wording of Class 2 within the Council Tax Support Scheme to align it with the Government's gradual increase of the state pension age. Please explain why you disagree.**

Answers in full

N/A	
31	No comments.
37	Because poorer working class people often have shorter lives and are in poorer health younger. Support after 60 years should be given in all areas financially, health and housing, they should after 60 be made a priority
38	I don't understand what you mean
39	I disagree. Older people over 60 (especially women) are finding it very hard to find and maintain jobs at this time. If the government had really wanted to do something about unequal pension ages they should have lowered men's pensionable age to 60. With youth unemployment skyrocketing the rise in pension age makes no sense.
46	Discounting the council tax bill for everyone 65+ by £100 is ridiculous. There're lots of wealthy pensioners in Islington. The 'Older Person Discount' should be dropped, as the poorest pensioners in receipt of Pension Credit will be protected. I know older people are the biggest voting demographic but for a Labour council to be bribing them for their electoral support by keeping this subsidy is, frankly, distasteful.

**7. Are there any comments or alternative proposals that you would like to make?**

Answers in full

8	Council Tax has already increased vastly in the last 10 years. Cuts need to be made to some support schemes to allow for an overall reduction to rate paying residents.
15	Pensioners have a higher income than many working families or unemployed people and do not need the protection
16	I feel that the option explored is the most reasonable. A blanket £100 to pensioners getting partial council tax support doesn't seem the best use of available monies though, as pensioners very often have hidden resources, it should be more effectively means tested - perhaps aligned to pension savings credit only.  It makes sense to protect care leavers and foster carers, as care leavers have no family support and foster carers save the local authority greatly. Two homes CTR provision makes sense, as it is minimally applied  some council tax liability for those of working age is fair, and prevents the shock when coming off of benefits
20	Council Tax support should be fully paid to those who rely on Benefits or struggle with low income. Those on low incomes or on benefits should not be penalised for council tax arrears for it brings them more poverty, misery and mental illness.
21	NO MORE INCREASES to Council Tax. You are bleeding working people dry!
26	Seems fair to all
28	Either make it 8.5% for all including pensioner or match the rest to pensioners.
31	All these forms of support schemes should be temporary, as they should be seen as public help to an unpredicted circumstance. The aim should be to help people who currently in financial difficulties to get back on their feet and become again financially independent. Providing benefits indefinitely is prone to abuse and exploitation by opportunists, and this is a form of injustice toward all honest people who make their best to keep up with their financial commitments.
37	And poorer elderly in Islington should be considered more, you shouldn't even consider taking away the £100
38	What checks are made to see that the ongoing support is appropriate. Where does the money come from to keep giving the support, who is paying for it. Again everyone is using the service and contributing is good. What checks are made to quantify how long the support is offered. Are people supported to find work.
42	I feel as the local authority is penalising those who work hard and earn more to be able to receive council tax support.

This additional expense is very disheartening as the area of Islington is not in good repair. It is very hard as a council employee to see what my council tax is being spent on when I see a large number of groups being advantageous. I do not feel people who work and live in the borough in particular receive any support from the local authority and I am bitterly disappointed as an employee and resident !

46 Re 'gender/which they were assigned at birth' - ridiculous stuff. Am aware this wording is widely used but - really!!!

51 It seems if you work then you have to pay for everything in the Borough not enough is being done to drive people into a job. Each year Council tax rises to pay for all sorts of other care.so the only people paying out is the people working.

52 I'm eyerolling at the way these questions are designed to reduce actual input and stop you getting good rich data. q4. Agree with the first part and not the second. If you can keep benefits the same and reallocate resources elsewhere as in q2, you can take resources from elsewhere an reallocate to this. you just don't want to.