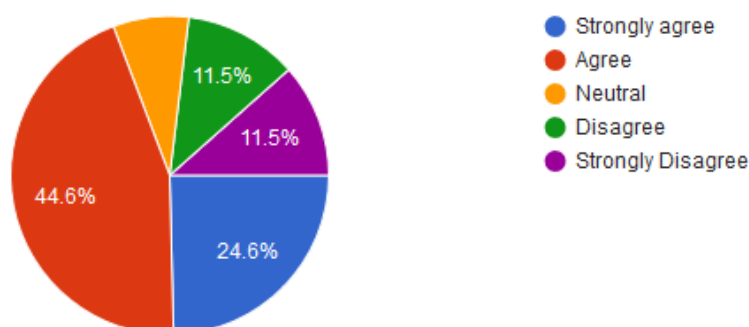


## Council Tax Support Consultation Analysis of Responses

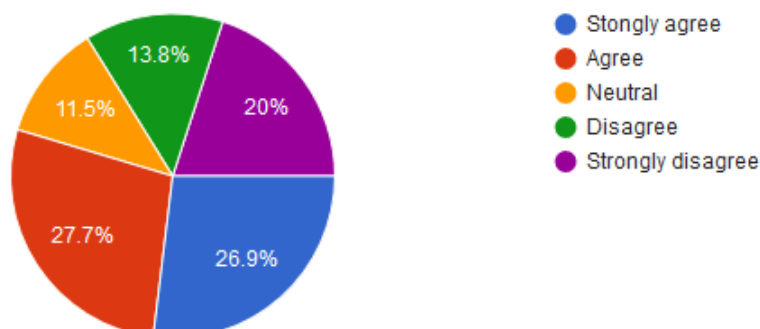
The council is considering an income banded scheme which would be a simple flat rate percentage discount awarded depending on what income band the person's total weekly income falls into. Do you agree that this would be a fair way to help people on a low income?

130 responses



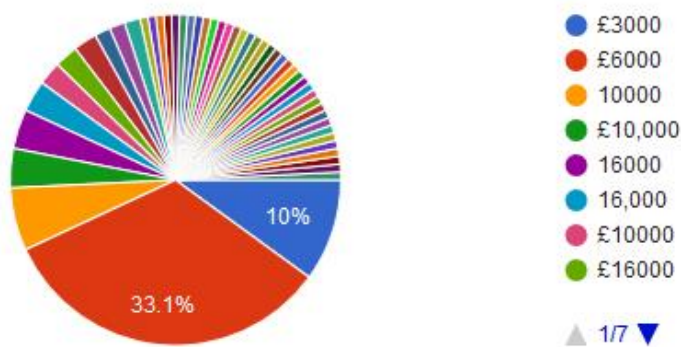
Currently council tax payers can have capital of up to £16,000 and still receive council tax support. Do you think that the capital limit should be reduced?

130 responses



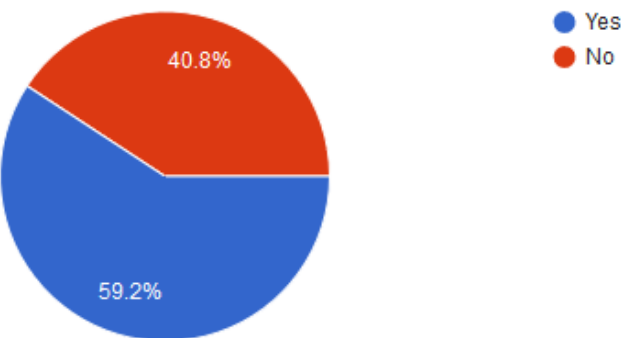
If you think the capital limit should be reduced what do you think the new limit should be?

130 responses



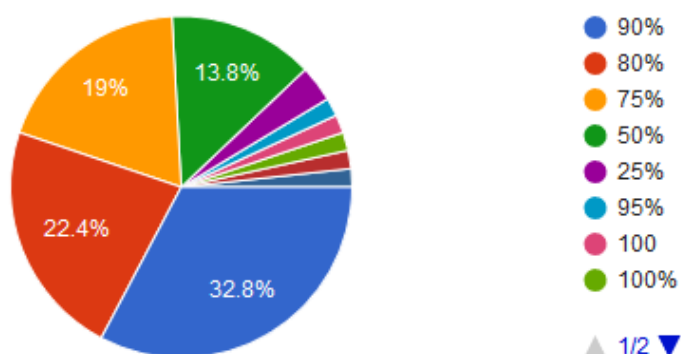
Currently a person can receive 100% council tax support and do not have to make any contribution towards their council tax payments. Do you think that people should continue to receive 100% help towards their council tax?

130 responses



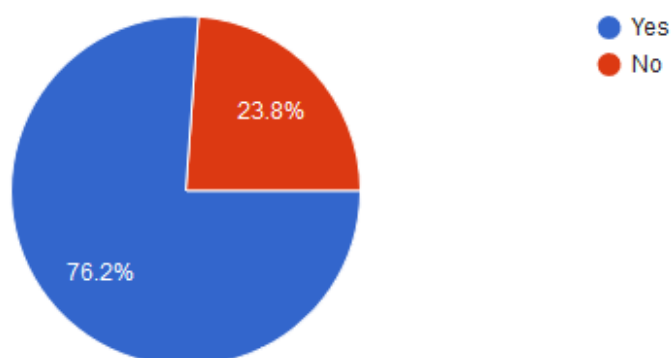
If you have answered no, what do you think the maximum amount of help should be?

58 responses



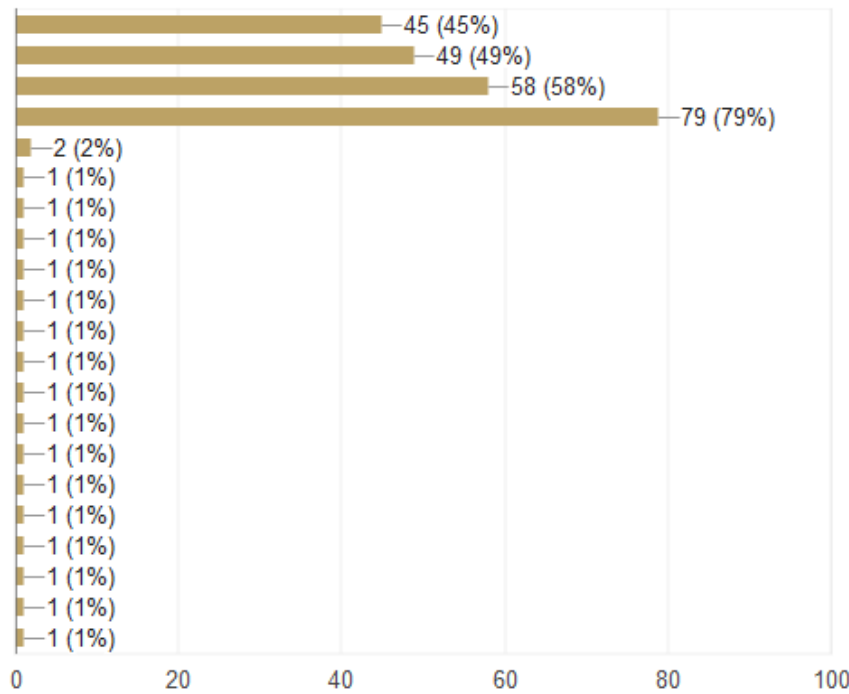
Should the council provide protection for some groups from any changes made to the council tax support scheme from April 2019?

130 responses



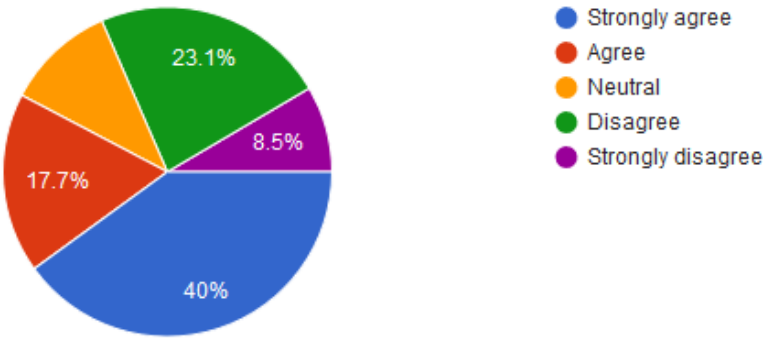
If you have answered yes, please tick which group(s) you think should receive protection.

100 responses



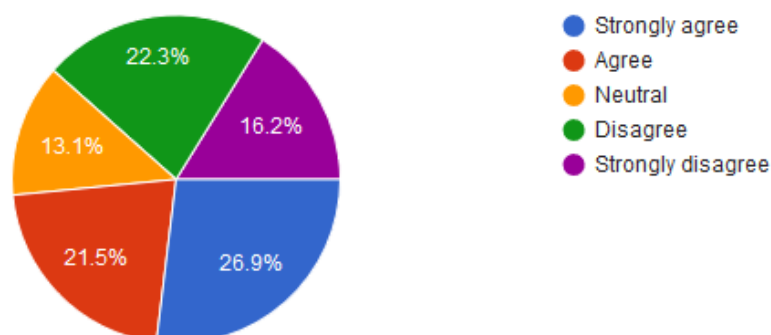
The current scheme ignores 100% of child benefit income. Do you agree that this income should be ignored for the purposes of calculating a person's weekly income?

130 responses



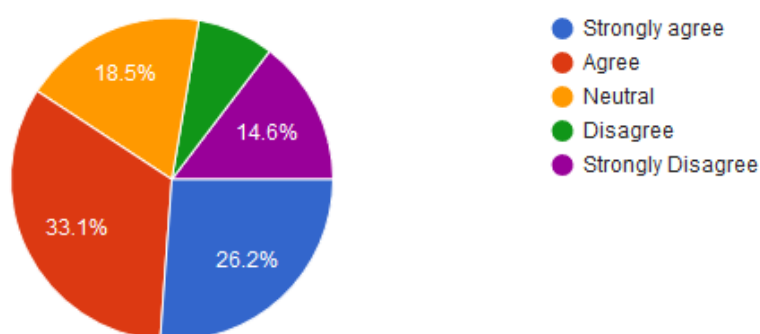
The current scheme ignores 100% of child maintenance payments received by the person. Do you agree that this income should be ignored for the purposes of calculating a person's weekly income?

130 responses



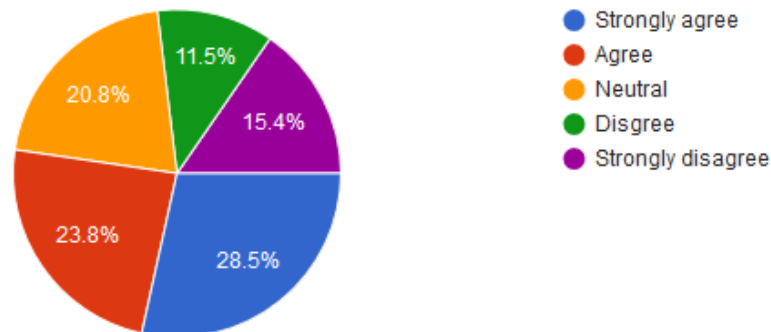
A non-dependant is a person living as part of someone's home but is not responsible for the household bills, like an elderly relative or a grown up son or daughter. Do you think that the non-dependant should make a contribution to the running of the household which results in the council tax payer receiving less council tax support?

130 responses



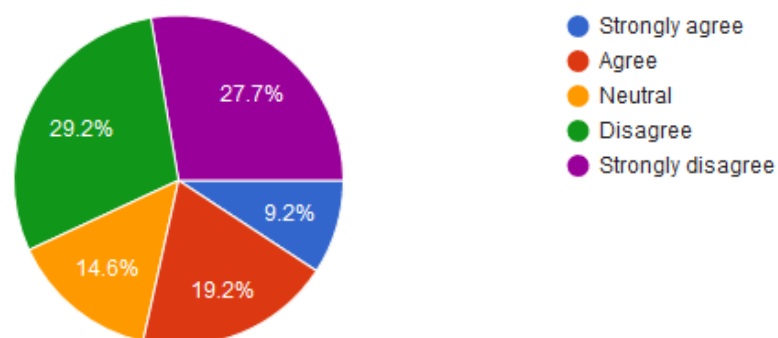
Currently council tax support is available to residents in Cheltenham regardless of the council tax band their property is in. Do you agree that there should be a restriction placed on the council tax support awarded to those in higher bands F, G and H? For example: the maximum council tax support payable to someone in a band G property would be based on the charge for a band E property.

130 responses



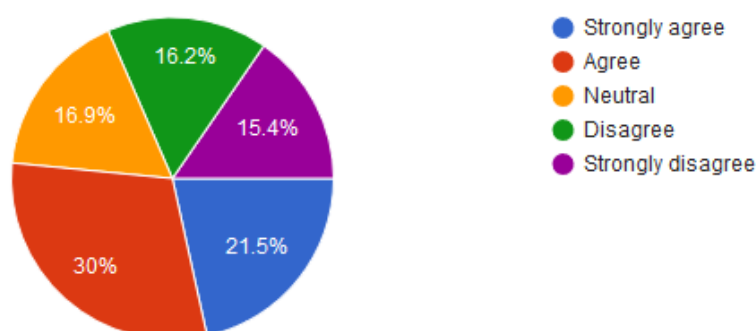
Currently a person can have their new council tax support claim backdated for a period of 6 months if they provide a good reason. Do you agree that this period should be shortened to one calendar month?

130 responses



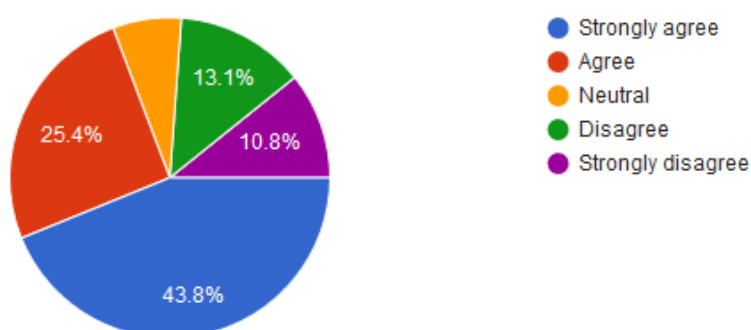
If a single applicant does not qualify for council tax support themselves, there is a provision for them to claim something called Second Adult Rebate. This can be awarded up to 25% of the council tax liability and is based on other people's income in household, for example an elderly relative or grown up children still living in the applicant's home. As Second Adult Rebate is not based on the council tax payer's ability to pay do you agree that this should be discontinued?

130 responses



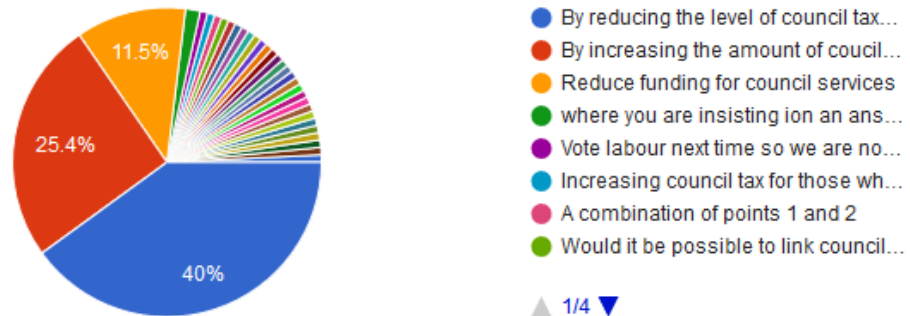
The current council tax support scheme allows people to be temporarily absent from their homes, living elsewhere in the world and still receive help towards their council tax. Do you agree that the period for which a person can be absent from their home should be reduced to 4 weeks for them to still qualify for help?

130 responses



## How do you think the council should continue to fund its council tax support scheme from April 2019?

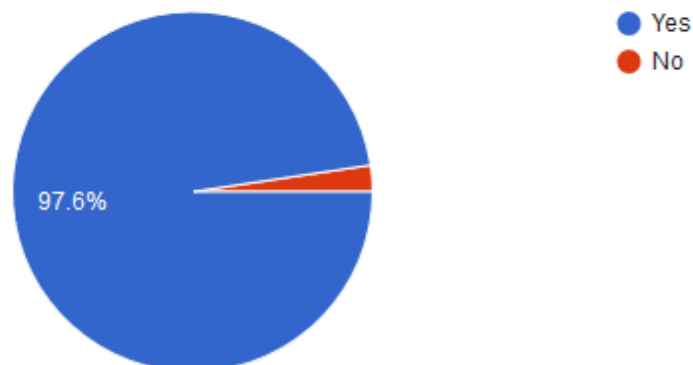
130 responses



## Equalities questions - About you

### Are you a resident of the Cheltenham Borough area?

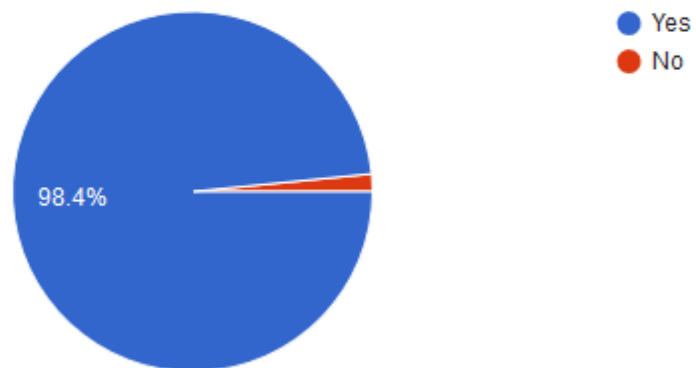
127 responses





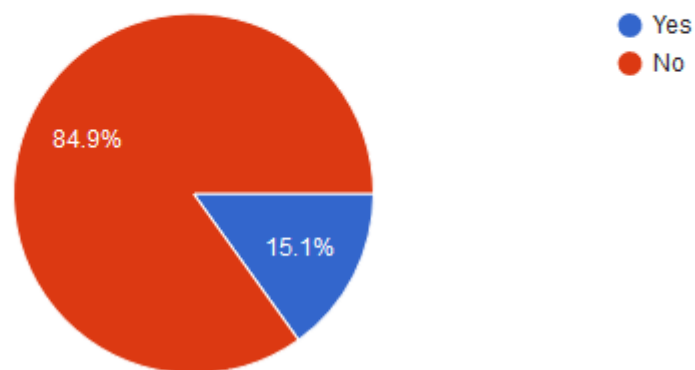
## Are you registered for council tax?

127 responses



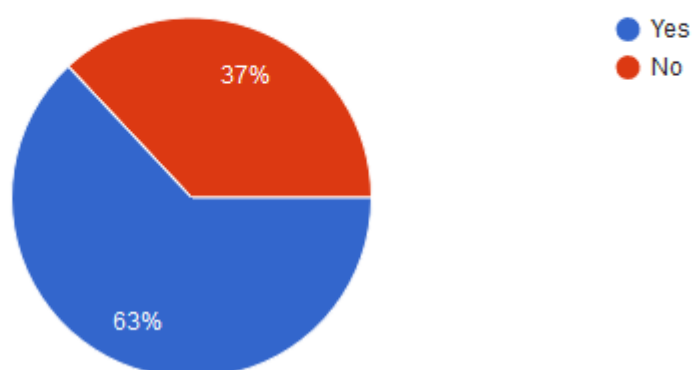
## Do you currently receive council tax support?

126 responses



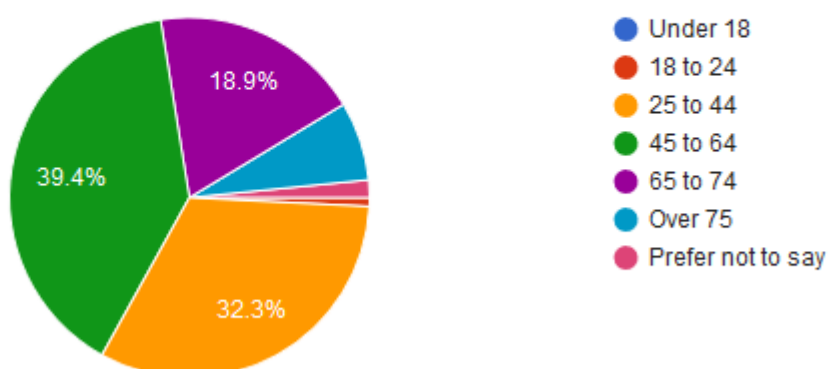
## Are you in employment?

127 responses



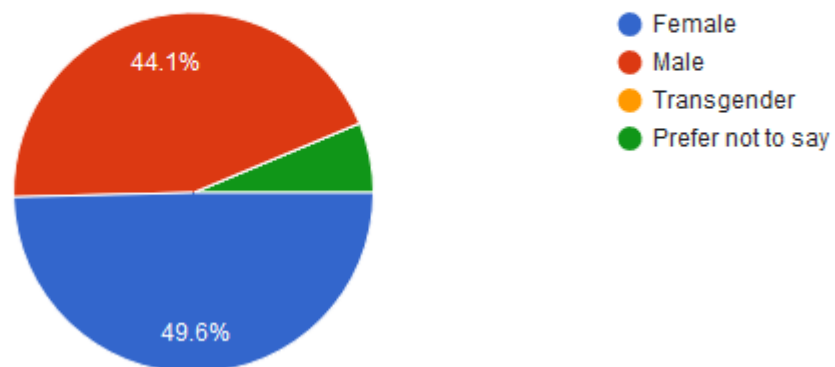
## What is your age group?

127 responses



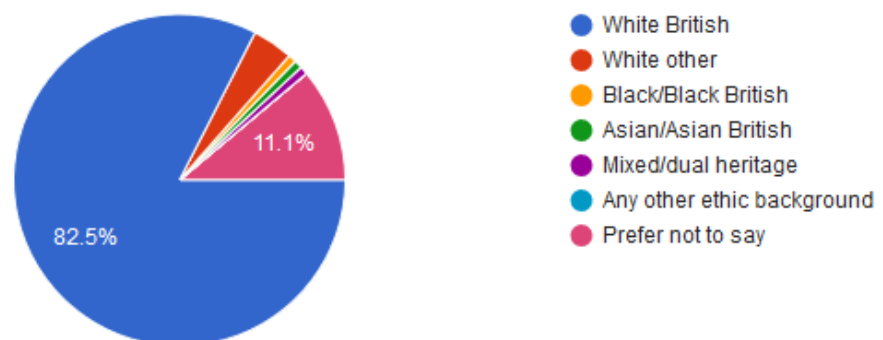
## What is your gender?

127 responses



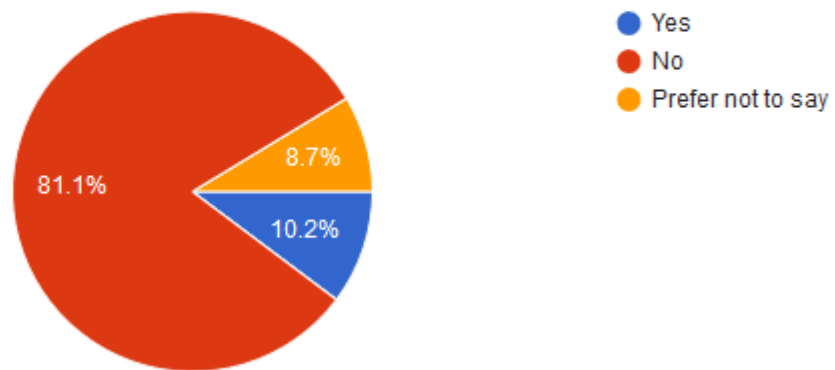
## What is your ethnicity?

126 responses



## Are you disabled?

127 responses





26 Church Street, Church Piece, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 8AR

Clerk: Mrs J Noles Tel: 01242 250087 email: [clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

23rd August 2018  
Mr David Wyatt  
Deputy Revenues and Benefits Manager  
Cheltenham Borough Council  
Municipal Offices Promenade Cheltenham GL50 9SA

Dear Mr Wyatt,

**Council Tax Support scheme 2019-20 - consultation survey**

The consultation document on the Council Tax Support scheme 2019-20, which was sent to us on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018, was considered at a meeting of the Charlton Kings Parish Council on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018. I have been asked to write to you following the meeting to communicate the Parish Council's agreed comments on the Council Tax Support scheme proposals and these are set out below.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on possible changes to the current Cheltenham Borough Council scheme for council tax support, which would affect many parish residents. We recognise the need to reduce extremely cost-ineffective administration associated with the current scheme but, hold that an important principle should be that administrative savings should be used to ensure that no-one currently in receipt of direct, personal, support should be disadvantaged by any change.

In response to the examples of possible options for change, we make the following comments:

**Example 1 - Introduce a scheme where all working age applicants pay a percentage of the charge:** We do not support this option which we believe would result in significant hardship and, also, that collecting increased payments could be cost-ineffective.

**Example 2 – Introduce an income banded scheme:** We consider that this concept is worth further exploration, but the way in which the support would be set within each band would be crucial if many were not to be disadvantaged. Essentially, this would require the support level to be set at the band minimum, i.e. at the highest current level.

It would have been helpful to have known, and should be made explicit:

- The number of income bands and their income values •
- Whether the bands are set on a weekly/monthly/annual income, or some other period
- If the bands would be increased each year in line with an index of inflation.

Similarly, in justification of proposing such a significant change, it should be made clear how many in-year assessments are currently being carried out and, what reduction on this number is anticipated should this proposal be introduced.

**Example 3 – Introduce a capital limit of £6,000:** We do not consider that this is an acceptable option and is not linked to administrative savings.

**Example 4 – Introduce changes to the income that is disregarded in the calculation:** We do not support this option, which would have a direct impact on children's well-being.

**Example 5 – Discontinue the payment of Second Adult Rebate:** We would not, in principle, be opposed to this option which currently seems to introduce an unnecessarily complicated measure of indirect support to a very small number of people at high administrative cost. However, even though it applies to only a small number of families, there is, presumably a justification for currently offering this rebate, so is it considered that withdrawal would impact significantly on these families? Is this measure likely to produce a re-cyclable sum of sufficient size to warrant its consideration?

We hope that our comments will be a helpful contribution to your consultation and look forward to receiving feedback on future developments in relation to the Council Tax Support Scheme in due course.

With good wishes,

Joanna Noles

Clerk & RFO to the Parish Council  
Charlton Kings Parish Council  
26 Church Street  
Charlton Kings  
Cheltenham GL53 8AR

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Tel 01242 250087

## Cheltenham Labour Party

### Response to the Borough Council Consultation on changes to Council Tax exemptions

Cheltenham Labour Party is opposed to any changes to the current scheme of Council Tax exemptions operated by Cheltenham Borough Council as proposed in the consultation document.

We would support a scheme which reduced the administrative burden of the process providing it could be conclusively demonstrated that the poorest families in our town were not disadvantaged. The current proposals fail to demonstrate that, and the proposals would result in households in low income bands paying increased council tax. These proposals effectively redistribute the burden of local taxation from the most affluent to the least affluent in Cheltenham.

In making these proposals the Borough Council does not appear to have carried out an equalities impact assessment in line with the Public Sector Equalities Duty under Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010. Such an assessment is essential if the Borough Council is to meet its obligation to treat different groups in our town in an equitable and fair manner. There is no evidence that these proposals will meet that standard.

The current proposals fail to consider the imposition of the Government's Universal Credit scheme on households in Cheltenham. Any changes to the exemption scheme should assess households in line with Universal Credit assessments to prevent either unnecessary overpayment by families, or underpayment which would need to be reclaimed from families with no or little savings with which to meet a debt which is not of their own making.

Most households affected by the proposals in this consultation document live in a state of genuine poverty. Any increased council tax demand on their current low-income levels will have a very significant impact on their household budget. These families will prioritise feeding and clothing their families and heating their homes rather than paying increased council tax demands or be driven into debt. As a result, the administrative burden and cost to the Borough Council will be increased through having to take families to court to seek payment of Council Tax. Many of those families will not have the resources to meet the payments required. As a result, the Borough Council may find itself incurring additional expenditure in a needless pursuit of impoverished households through the courts.

Malcolm Bride

Chair, Cheltenham Labour Party

Basement Office  
67 Clarence Street,  
Cheltenham  
GL50 3LB

03.09.2018

We have reviewed your proposals for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2019/20 and we are supportive of your proposals.

We agree that an income banded scheme is a fair way to help people on low income and we think that people should continue to receive 100% help towards their council tax where applicable.

We do not think that you should reduce the capital limit of £16k.

I hope that helps.

Regards

Peter

**Peter Skelton**

**Chief Finance Officer**

Finance Department

Gloucestershire Constabulary and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Police Headquarters | No.1 Waterwells | Waterwells Drive | Quedgeley |

Gloucestershire | GL2 2AN

Personal - 01452 752240 | Group - 01452 754312 | Force Control Room - 101

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