



Council Tax Support

Customer First Analysis 2020/21

August 2019

The Council's response to the public sector equality duty is a comprehensive Customer First Analysis.

1. Purpose

- **What are you trying to achieve with the policy / service / function?**

The Council wishes to consult on options for changes to its Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21.

- **Who defines and manages it?**

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 and Local Government Finance Act 2012 provide the scope for Local Council Tax Support Schemes.

The consultation will be designed and implemented by Benefits, Revenues and Customer Contact management team.

- **Who do you intend to benefit from it and how?**

This is a consultation only at this stage. Decision makers will benefit by being informed on public opinion and residents will benefit from having the opportunity to provide their views on options.

- **What could prevent people from getting the most out of the scheme?**

Accessibility could be a barrier to being able to participate in the consultation; however the consultation strategy has considered accessibility and all information provided will be available in several formats.

- **How will you get your customers involved in the analysis and how will you tell people about it?**

Consultation on options for a revised Council Tax Support Scheme will take place between 13th September and 5th December 2019. The consultation will be made available to as many people as possible using a variety of methods

such as web forms, postal surveys and telephone surveys. A consultation strategy has been written which covers this in more detail.

The Council Tax Support project has dedicated web pages on the Council's website: www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport

2. Evidence

- **How will you know if the policy delivers its intended outcome / benefits?**

The consultation aims to gather responses to enable a meaningful consideration of public opinion to be taken into account if changes are to be made to the 2020/21 Council Tax Support Scheme.

- **How satisfied are your customers and how do you know?**

The proposed consultation will address this.

- **What existing data do you have on the people that use the service and the wider population?**

Data we will use for this consultation includes names and addresses of liable Council Tax payers and current recipients of Council Tax Support.

We hold household and income details of current Council Tax Support recipients but this will not be used as part of the consultation. We have access to wider population statistics which will enable us to assess the range of responses we have received as equality monitoring data will be available (albeit optional) as part of the survey.

- **What other information would it be useful to have? How could you get this?**

It is not possible to future proof a Council Tax Support scheme, our claimant base changes on a daily basis and we cannot always foresee or predict major changes locally or nationally which is why a broad consultation is appropriate before narrowing down potential changes. We will be monitoring the consultations and schemes proposed by other local authorities in order to ensure that our scheme options are broadly consistent with national and local changes.

- **Are you breaking down data by equality groups where relevant (such as by gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity)?**

Yes – equalities data will be collected throughout the consultation and will be used when analysing data.

- **Are you using partners, stakeholders, and councillors to get information and feedback?**

Yes – the consultation will be as inclusive as we can manage within our resources and we will consult with partners, groups and councillors.

3. Impact

- **Are some people benefiting more – or less - than others? If so, why might this be?**

No.

4. Actions

- **If the evidence suggests that the policy / service / function benefits a particular group – or disadvantages another - is there a justifiable reason for this and if so, what is it?**

This consultation is open to everyone.

- **Is it discriminatory in any way?**

No.

- **Is there a possible impact in relationships or perceptions between different parts of the community?**

No, the consultation is open to everyone in our community.

- **What measures can you put in place to reduce disadvantages?**

The consultation will be as accessible as we can make it in order to allow people to have their say.

- **Do you need to consult further?**

Not at this stage.

- **Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?**

This will be the fourth Council Tax Support consultation since 2012 and we have learned from previous consultations how we can communicate with our residents with clarity and how we can gather enough responses to make the consultation meaningful.

We intend to build on our previous consultation successes to gather a wide range of public opinion.

- **Who should you tell about the outcomes of this analysis?**

This analysis will form part of the wider Council Tax Support project and will be included with all documents available to the public as part of our commitment to transparency.

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- **Have you built the actions into your Business Plan with a clear timescale?**

Yes.

- **When will this assessment need to be repeated?**

If this project progresses to changes to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2020/21, this assessment will be repeated with any changes to the scheme taken into consideration.