

### Consultation - Public

The Draft Scheme was published on 14 September 2012 and invited members of the public, affected parties and support groups to comment. It was advertised in Cambridge Matters, 3,500 letters sent; 2,500 to Council tax Payers and 1,000 to Council Tax Benefit recipients.

We emailed and sent letters to 200+ organisations, including Citizens Advice Bureau, Landlords, disability and other support groups.

We received 67 responses by the time the consultation ended 31 October 2012. Responses below show our Key Principles received overall support in each category

1 being very important 5 being not important at all	1	2	3	4	5
The current level of Council Tax Support should be protected for as many people as possible under the new scheme	<b>52.2%</b>	13.4%	14.9%	1.5%	17.9%
Where it is not possible to protect everyone, the most vulnerable people should be protected.	<b>70.1%</b>	11.9%	1.5%	3.0%	13.4%
Changes in Council Tax discounts and exemptions should be used to fund the reduction in Government grant	<b>42.2%</b>	15.6%	18.8%	3.1%	20.3%
The scheme should encourage people to go into work or increase the number of hours worked	<b>48.5%</b>	13.6%	13.6%	7.6%	16.7%
Non-dependant adults in the household should contribute towards the Council Tax bill according to their income.	<b>47.0%</b>	24.2%	10.6%	7.6%	10.6%
The sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and their families should be recognised.	<b>28.8%</b>	13.6%	21.2%	15.2%	21.2%
Second Adult Rebate should not be included in the new scheme.	<b>31.8%</b>	13.6%	30.3%	9.1%	15.2%

Proposals for groups of people who should be classes as vulnerable are as follows, with the most popular highlighted:

	Agree	Don't Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree

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All families with dependant children	34.4%	<b>52.5%</b>	13.1%
Young people aged 18 to 24 with a history of social care	<b>63.9%</b>	26.2%	9.8%
Households where a member receives a Disability Benefit	<b>72.1%</b>	21.3%	6.6%
People who are registered as blind	<b>83.3%</b>	10.0%	6.7%
Carers who receive a Carer's Allowance	<b>60.7%</b>	23.0%	16.4%

We invited comments on the classes of vulnerable groups and some of these are given below.

Adults with mental health issues, especially single adults

People who are registered as disabled on low incomes but not necessarily on DLA

Asylum seekers. For their welfare.

Only families with children under 5

We also welcomed additional comments at the end of the consultation and a selection are given below:

I think you should gain the maximum amount from changes to tax on 2nd & empty properties etc.; also lobby government for higher tax bands & greatly increased tax on the highest bands, and use the money raised to ensure no-one loses out over the CT Benefit changes.

Removal of backdating will impact the vulnerable so should not be Implemented

Make sure that those either born with or acquired severe disabilities—both physical and mental are fully protected.

In addition to the defined consultation process above, opinions have been sought from the Cambridgeshire Financial Capabilities Forum, Diversity Forum and other groups. In general terms, the Draft Scheme has been well supported and there are only additional two proposals to be made following the consultations.

Consider allowing up to one month backdating – this brings the Cambridge City Council scheme in line with Universal Credit (to be introduced from October 2013 onwards), and protects people who for extenuating reasons were unable to make their claim earlier.

Consider placing charge payers who receive Disabled Band Reduction as a vulnerable class. These people may choose not to receive a disability income but could still be classed as disabled and therefore vulnerable.

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### Council Tax Support Consultation 2012



1. With reference to the key principles document, please indicate how important these are to you. Give each a score according to how important they are to you: 1 being very important and 5 being not important at all.

	1	2	3	4	5	Response Count
The current level of Council Tax Support should be protected for as many people as possible under the new scheme.	52.2% (35)	13.4% (9)	14.9% (10)	1.5% (1)	17.9% (12)	67
Where it is not possible to protect everyone, the most vulnerable people should be protected.	70.1% (47)	11.9% (8)	1.5% (1)	3.0% (2)	13.4% (9)	67
Changes in Council Tax discounts and exemptions should be used to fund the reduction in Government grant	42.2% (27)	15.6% (10)	18.8% (12)	3.1% (2)	20.3% (13)	64
The scheme should encourage people to go into work or increase the number of hours worked.	48.5% (32)	13.6% (9)	13.6% (9)	7.6% (5)	16.7% (11)	66
Non-dependant adults in the household should contribute towards the Council Tax bill according to their income.	47.0% (31)	24.2% (16)	10.6% (7)	7.6% (5)	10.6% (7)	66
The sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and their families should be recognised.	28.8% (19)	13.6% (9)	21.2% (14)	15.2% (10)	21.2% (14)	66
Second Adult Rebate should not be included in the new scheme.	31.8% (21)	13.6% (9)	30.3% (20)	9.1% (6)	15.2% (10)	66
					<b>answered question</b>	<b>67</b>
					<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

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<b>2. With reference to the Draft Scheme document, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposals?</b>				
	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Don't Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
The current level of support for Council Tax will be maintained for as many people as possible	<b>67.2% (41)</b>	16.4% (10)	16.4% (10)	61
Council Tax changes for second homes should be used to fund some of the shortfall in Government grants for Council Tax Support	<b>79.0% (49)</b>	12.9% (8)	8.1% (5)	62
Council Tax changes for empty dwellings should be used to fund some of the shortfall in Government grants for Council Tax Support	<b>77.4% (48)</b>	11.3% (7)	11.3% (7)	62
In 2013-14 the rates of personal allowances, premiums and components shall be set in line with those for Housing Benefit	<b>54.1% (33)</b>	4.9% (3)	41.0% (25)	61
Fully disregard income from War Disablement Pension and War Widows/Widowers Pension	<b>45.0% (27)</b>	36.7% (22)	18.3% (11)	60
Change the deductions made for some non-dependant adults living with the Council Tax Payer	<b>58.3% (35)</b>	20.0% (12)	21.7% (13)	60
Abolish second adult rebate for working age people	<b>45.9% (28)</b>	36.1% (22)	18.0% (11)	61
A reduction to working age claims of between 0% and 20% will be reviewed and set each year according to budgetary needs (Draft Scheme for explanation)	<b>41.7% (25)</b>	28.3% (17)	30.0% (18)	60
In 2013-14 financial year, the above reduction shall be a close to 0% as possible (Draft Scheme for explanation)	<b>53.4% (31)</b>	19.0% (11)	27.6% (16)	58
Persons classed as vulnerable shall be exempt from the above percentage reduction	<b>77.0% (47)</b>	11.5% (7)	11.5% (7)	61

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Council Tax Reduction shall not be awarded for periods before the application is received by the Council	57.4% (35)	31.1% (19)	11.5% (7)	61
A cash limited discretionary "Exceptional Hardship Fund" should be set aside	72.6% (45)	12.9% (8)	14.5% (9)	62
			answered question	62
			skipped question	5

### 3. Please indicate if you agree or disagree that the following groups should be classed as vulnerable

	Agree	Don't Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Response Count
All families with dependant children	34.4% (21)	52.5% (32)	13.1% (8)	61
Young people aged 18 to 24 with a history of social care	63.9% (39)	26.2% (16)	9.8% (6)	61
Households where a member receives a Disability Benefit	72.1% (44)	21.3% (13)	6.6% (4)	61
People who are registered as blind	83.3% (50)	10.0% (6)	6.7% (4)	60
Carers who receive a Carer's Allowance	60.7% (37)	23.0% (14)	16.4% (10)	61
Are there other groups that you believe should be classed as vulnerable and therefore given extra protection?	35.6% (16)	24.4% (11)	40.0% (18)	45
			Please state which groups and your reason why:	18
			answered question	61
			skipped question	6

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### 4. What do you think the new scheme should be called?



	Tick one only	Response Count
Council Tax Benefit	100.0% (13)	13
Council Tax Reduction	100.0% (6)	6
Council Tax Support	100.0% (35)	35
	Other	3
	answered question	54
	skipped question	13

### 5. We welcome any additional comments you have concerning the proposals

	Response Count	
	23	
	answered question	23
	skipped question	44

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6. Are you responding as:		
	Please tick all that apply to you	Response Count
Running a business based in Cambridge	100.0% (2)	2
Private Landlord	100.0% (4)	4
Housing Association	100.0% (4)	4
Letting Agent	0.0% (0)	0
Voluntary/Community Organisation	100.0% (3)	3
Public Sector Organisation	100.0% (5)	5
Resident living in Cambridge	100.0% (44)	44
	Please give your post code	38
	answered question	53
	skipped question	14

7. Do you or someone in your household receive Council Tax Benefit?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		29.1%	16
No		69.1%	38
Not Sure		3.6%	2
	answered question		55
	skipped question		12

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<b>8. Do you or someone in your household receive any of the following Benefits?</b>		
	Tick all that apply	Response Count
Housing Benefit	100.0% (13)	13
Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance	100.0% (7)	7
Child Benefit	100.0% (4)	4
Child or Working Tax Credits	100.0% (5)	5
Disability benefits including Disability Living Allowance	100.0% (9)	9
None of the above	100.0% (27)	27
	answered question	48
	skipped question	19

<b>9. Which of the following age bands do you fall into?</b>		
	Tick one that applies	Response Count
Under 18	0.0% (0)	0
18-24	100.0% (4)	4
25-34	100.0% (5)	5
35-44	100.0% (11)	11
45-54	100.0% (14)	14
55-64	100.0% (11)	11
65-74	100.0% (6)	6
75+	100.0% (2)	2
Prefer not to say	100.0% (4)	4
	answered question	57
	skipped question	10



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<b>10. Are you Male/Female?</b>		
	Tick one that applies	Response Count
Male	100.0% (26)	26
Female	100.0% (26)	26
Prefer not to say	100.0% (5)	5
	answered question	57
	skipped question	10

<b>11. Is your gender identity the same gender you were assigned at birth?</b>		
	Tick one that applies	Response Count
Yes	100.0% (47)	47
No	100.0% (1)	1
Prefer not to say	100.0% (6)	6
	answered question	54
	skipped question	13

<b>12. Do you believe you have a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act definition?</b>		
	Tick one that applies	Response Count
Yes	100.0% (8)	8
No	100.0% (42)	42
Prefer not to say	100.0% (7)	7
	answered question	57
	skipped question	10

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<b>13. How would you describe your ethnic group?</b>		
	<b>Tick one that applies</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
White - British	<b>100.0% (45)</b>	45
White - Irish	0.0% (0)	0
White - Other (please specify below)	<b>100.0% (6)</b>	6
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0.0% (0)	0
Mixed - White and Black African	0.0% (0)	0
Mixed - White and Asian	0.0% (0)	0
Mixed - Any other mixed background (please specify below)	<b>100.0% (3)</b>	3
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0.0% (0)	0
Black or Black British - African	0.0% (0)	0
Black or Black British - Any other Black background (please specify below)	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	1
Asian or Asian British - Indian	<b>100.0% (2)</b>	2
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0.0% (0)	0
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.0% (0)	0
Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background (please specify below)	0.0% (0)	0
Chinese	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	1
	Other (please specify)	9
	<b>answered question</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>skipped question</b>	<b>10</b>

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Page 4, Q3. Please indicate if you agree or disagree that the following groups should be classed as vulnerable		
1	People who are setting up a home after a period of homelessness or other unsettled life should be classed as vulnerable for a set period. Particularly women moving to their home after living in a women's refuge	Oct 31, 2012 4:29 PM
2	Any person who can prove a need e.g. those in receipt of supplementary benefit (probably called something else now)	Oct 31, 2012 3:12 PM
3	Service people, Army, Air Force, etc	Oct 31, 2012 1:24 PM
4	People who are registered as disabled on low incomes but not necessarily on DLA	Oct 30, 2012 9:25 PM
5	often those on benefit are better off than those borderline cases. benefit is too generous in many cases and disabled get allowances which take into account some expenses. cambridge suffers from too many students who do not pay council tax so the council needs the funds from somewhere but why should others subsidise!	Oct 26, 2012 6:50 PM
6	The piss poor.	Oct 26, 2012 10:21 AM
7	Those who are off-work in the long-term because of illness, i.e. recipients of long-term incapacity benefit, if not included in the above "Household where a member receives a Disability Benefit"	Oct 25, 2012 4:31 PM
8	Adults with mental health issues, especially single adults without Recently homeless These groups are vulnerable , arguably often much more vulnerable where they are not in receipt of a disability benefit than some of those who are.	Oct 22, 2012 2:18 PM
9	I am very concerned that those on Jobseekers Allowance will be expected to pay CT for the first time. On an income of £71 a week (single person) they are already living below the poverty line so could be at risk of not being able to sustain their tenancy. Mass non-payment by this group and others who simply cannot afford to pay may result in 'Poll Tax' type protests etc. Have we learned nothing from history? I am also keen to ensure that all those on income related ESA (both Support Group and Work Related Activity Group) should not have to pay any CT under the new rules.	Oct 22, 2012 2:12 PM
10	Separated dads who have at least one day per week contact with their children should be treated the same as the primary carer.	Oct 3, 2012 4:54 PM
11	Single parents with adult (18+) child away at college for part of the year, but still needing accommodation at home.	Oct 2, 2012 3:01 PM
12	geoups w	Sep 22, 2012 3:36 PM
13	people with mental illness and mental disability because they cannot fend for themselves and anyone on any illness related benefit	Sep 22, 2012 12:35 PM
14	Asylum seekers. For their welfare.	Sep 22, 2012 11:49 AM
15	students born in this country	Sep 20, 2012 5:05 PM
16	People who's sole income is welfare payments. They are vulnerable to changes in outgoings because they have no ability to control incoming payments. They do not pay other kinds of taxes such as income tax. I'm against using Council Tax as a punitive measure against the unemployed.	Sep 20, 2012 9:33 AM
Page 4, Q3. Please indicate if you agree or disagree that the following groups should be classed as vulnerable		
17	People who cannot get additional hours from their workplace or who cannot find another job to fit in with their existing job.	Sep 17, 2012 9:01 AM
18	Only families with children under 5	Sep 17, 2012 7:43 AM

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Page 5, Q4. What do you think the new scheme should be called?		
1	Does it matter	Oct 31, 2012 3:12 PM
2	Council Tax	Sep 22, 2012 7:56 PM
3	Super Council Tax Plus	Sep 22, 2012 11:51 AM
Page 5, Q5. We welcome any additional comments you have concerning the proposals		
1	in order to meet your aim for the scheme to be predictable and transparent, you should publish the details of the circumstances someone could claim a discretionary payment and clearly state the procedure for doing so. I would recommend that you consult with support workers/social workers etc to ensure that this aspect of your scheme will function adequately to protect those most vulnerable in our society at times of crisis and hardship.	Oct 31, 2012 4:32 PM
2	Explanation in the local papers	Oct 31, 2012 3:12 PM
3	The absolute provision for recovery of overpayments even when there is underlying entitlement (item4) seems draconian. We would like to see some discretion e.g. family with young children or disabled person, where partner has left or new one moved in, if the family is on max bens, the amount of CT reduction would remain the same. If the change is notified late for whatever reason, recovery of the overpayment is automatic. this could be detrimental and potentially damaging to children or disabled person. The scheme appears very harsh on claimants out of work. Although we note the comment that there are "job opportunities" the people we work with are frankly often "unemployable" in their current condition rather than "work shy". Also, is it fair to charge those who have been made redundant through no fault of their own but may have known no other employment, but are still actively looking for work. Or what about those who have been on IB for many years but have just been refused ESA and so are already having to adjust to a sudden and substantial cut in their income (3.69% - 5.32% of their min weekly ben - £71 for single people over 25 and £56.25 for under 25s - CT. Claimants may have to choose between paying CTax and eating/heating.	Oct 30, 2012 9:46 PM
4	Registered disabled should not pay any council tax, but armed forces personnel should.	Oct 28, 2012 10:31 AM
5	more careful means testing!!!	Oct 26, 2012 6:51 PM
6	I would just like to comment that this was a very difficult survey to complete and I think you could have made it easier.	Oct 26, 2012 2:53 PM
7	There should be consistency with any scheme implemented by SCDC	Oct 26, 2012 10:20 AM
8	I think you should gain the maximum amount from changes to tax on 2nd & empty properties etc.; also lobby government for higher tax bands & greatly increased tax on the highest bands, and use the money raised to ensure no-one loses out over the CT Benefit changes.	Oct 25, 2012 4:35 PM
9	Removal of backdating will impact the vulnerable so should not be implemented	Oct 24, 2012 3:50 PM
10	The council should make sure that it publicises that the changes have been forced upon them, due to changes made by central government. At a time of low wages, wage freezes, job losses, profound changes to the benefits system, increasing rents in the private sector and reductions in housing benefit support, any reduction of financial support will affect those who can least bear it.	Oct 24, 2012 11:20 AM
11	I appreciate that you are doing your best to cope with a difficult situation, but I am very concerned that those currently on means-tested benefits (an indication of very low income) will be expected to pay something towards their CT. It did not work with the Poll Tax and it will not work with the new CT Scheme, as they simply will NOT pay and the Council will spend more money on chasing the arrears than they actually collect from these groups!	Oct 22, 2012 2:15 PM

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Page 5, Q5. We welcome any additional comments you have concerning the proposals		
12	When assessing income you should include child benefit and child support payments.	Oct 3, 2012 4:55 PM
13	Reducing the discount for second homes should only go ahead if owners are given the right to vote in local elections . Fairness should apply to all residents and it is not fair that those who pay council tax receive no vote yet those who re rive full council tax can vote	Sep 25, 2012 9:38 PM
14	Don't waste money mailing 2 letters to one resident. Ensure those on Income Support or ESA do not need to pay any council tax, as in the past.	Sep 22, 2012 7:56 PM
15	Any additional burden on currently council tax paying residents is not tolerable.	Sep 22, 2012 3:38 PM
16	that for the disabled the council tax benefit should not be reduced and anyone on any disability benefit.	Sep 22, 2012 12:37 PM
17	Good luck Team.	Sep 22, 2012 11:51 AM
18	Council bands on properties of multiiple occupation should be increase to account for the fact that the property could be rated C or D band, contain 6 or more working adults. Due to this fact the council are losing revenue.	Sep 22, 2012 6:57 AM
19	Make sure that those either born with or acquired severe disabilities--both physical and mental are fully protected.	Sep 21, 2012 11:07 PM
20	Council tax is to pay for community services within a city, and for this reason, it should be paid per capita/household/occupied house to reflect the fact that each member of society bears the same cost. People who are not able to pay should not be exempt and instead should receive some extra-financial help according to their issue (so with more money they will be able to pay the council services). Likewise, charging someone twice (because they own 2 properties) is not really fair in my point of view.	Sep 21, 2012 12:54 PM
21	stop paying it to immigrants without them working here for 5 years and paying in to system. Regardless off status. apply it to every immigrant.	Sep 20, 2012 5:08 PM
22	I'm alarmed by the suggestion that Council Tax might be used as a way of punishing the unemployed to "motivate" them to seek work. This is not fair or just.	Sep 20, 2012 9:37 AM
23	Do not get rid of single person discount to fund the changes, please.	Sep 18, 2012 5:57 PM

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Page 6, Q6. Are you responding as:		
1	cb4 2jy	Oct 31, 2012 3:19 PM
2	CB4 1FR	Oct 31, 2012 1:26 PM
3	CB4 2US	Oct 31, 2012 12:22 PM
4	CB1 2BL	Oct 30, 2012 9:47 PM
5	CB4 1BJ	Oct 29, 2012 11:28 AM
6	CB5 8QY	Oct 28, 2012 2:22 PM
7	cb2 8ph	Oct 28, 2012 10:32 AM
8	cb1 9en	Oct 27, 2012 11:11 AM
9	CB2	Oct 26, 2012 6:52 PM
10	CB3	Oct 26, 2012 2:54 PM
11	cb6 1ad	Oct 26, 2012 10:30 AM
12	CB4	Oct 26, 2012 10:29 AM
13	CB4 1BS	Oct 25, 2012 4:36 PM
14	cb5 8bj	Oct 24, 2012 3:51 PM
15	CB2 1JN	Oct 24, 2012 12:58 PM
16	CB2 1JH	Oct 24, 2012 11:21 AM
17	CB24 9ZR	Oct 22, 2012 2:16 PM
18	Cb5 8tz	Oct 18, 2012 4:40 PM
19	CB4 1GL	Oct 16, 2012 5:13 PM
20	cb5	Oct 15, 2012 9:56 PM
21	cb4	Oct 3, 2012 4:56 PM
22	CB4 2AU	Oct 2, 2012 3:03 PM
23	CB3 9EU	Oct 1, 2012 6:10 PM
24	CB5 8TY	Sep 29, 2012 7:08 PM
25	CB1 9JT	Sep 26, 2012 9:14 PM
26	Cb 2 7 ty	Sep 25, 2012 9:39 PM
27	CB19JZ	Sep 22, 2012 8:06 PM
28	CB4	Sep 22, 2012 7:57 PM
29	cb1 3og	Sep 22, 2012 1:16 PM
30	CB4 3EZ	Sep 22, 2012 12:38 PM
Page 6, Q6. Are you responding as:		
31	cb2 8ah	Sep 22, 2012 11:57 AM
32	cb4 2ug	Sep 22, 2012 6:58 AM
33	CB21LR	Sep 21, 2012 11:08 PM
34	XB4 2BL	Sep 21, 2012 12:55 PM
35	cb58pr	Sep 20, 2012 5:13 PM
36	CB5 8EG	Sep 20, 2012 9:37 AM
37	Cb2 9lw	Sep 18, 2012 10:12 PM
38	cb4 1yf	Sep 18, 2012 6:00 PM

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Page 7, Q13. How would you describe your ethnic group?		
1	This section I consider irrelevant	Oct 31, 2012 3:13 PM
2	None of your	Oct 26, 2012 10:23 AM
3	Prefer not to say	Oct 26, 2012 10:21 AM
4	irrelevant	Oct 22, 2012 2:20 PM
5	Answering on behalf of an organisation	Oct 1, 2012 6:11 PM
6	prefer not to say	Sep 22, 2012 3:40 PM
7	None of your business, my race is not the issue here.	Sep 22, 2012 1:17 PM
8	ENGLISH	Sep 22, 2012 6:59 AM
9	Prefer not to say	Sep 21, 2012 12:55 PM