Harborough District Council
Council tax support scheme
Public consultation

This is a joint consultation involving a number of different councils across Leicester and Leicestershire, inviting residents, businesses and others to submit their views to help shape their respective council tax support scheme.

Continued cuts in government funding mean that Harborough District Council is looking to make substantial budget saving. Some of these savings could be made by changing the way we administer and manage the council tax support scheme.

This consultation asks whether you think we should change our current scheme to make necessary savings.

It is therefore important that you give us your views to help shape your local council tax support scheme for the financial year 2017/18. This consultation will run from 4 August until 28 September 2016.

Consultation summary:

All working-age council tax payers in Harborough currently have to pay at least 15% towards their council tax bill.

We would like your views on four potential options:

Option 1: Make no change to the current limit of support.

Option 2: Reduce the maximum support to 80%, meaning customers in receipt of council tax support would have to pay at least 20% towards their council tax bill.

Option 3: Reduce the maximum support to 75%, meaning customers in receipt of council tax support would have to pay at least 25% towards their council tax bill.

Option 4: Reduce the maximum support to 70%, meaning customers in receipt of council tax support would have to pay at least 30% towards their council tax bill.

The attached questionnaire is also available online at consultations.leicester.gov.uk if you would prefer to fill in an electronic version.

Alternatively, fill in the attached questionnaire and return to:

Council Tax Support consultation
Harborough District Council
PO Box 10004
Hinckley
LE10 9EJ
Q1) Are you responding to this survey as:
(please tick all that apply)

☐ a resident
☐ a landlord *
☐ a local voluntary or community sector organisation *
☐ other (please specify)

☐ a local business *
☐ a local charity *

Q2) Do you think the council should keep the current scheme unchanged?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don’t know / no opinion

Do you have any comments on Option 1?

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Option 2 - Reduce the maximum support to 80%

Q3) Do you think that the council should achieve savings by reducing the maximum council tax reduction to 80%, meaning that all customers would pay at least 20% towards their council tax bill?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don't know / no opinion

If you think this option would increase your tax bill, please tell us what (if anything) you would need to do to be able to pay the increase:

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Do you have any comments on Option 2?

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Option 3 - Reduce the maximum support to 75%

Q4) Do you think that the council should achieve savings by reducing the maximum council tax reduction to 75%, meaning that all customers would pay at least 25% towards their council tax bill?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know / no opinion

If you think this option would increase your tax bill, please tell us what (if anything) you would need to do to be able to pay the increase?

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Do you have any comments on Option 3?

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Option 4 - Reduce the maximum support to 70%

Q5) Do you think that the council should achieve savings by reducing the maximum council tax reduction to 70%, meaning that all customers would pay at least 30% towards their council tax bill?

☐ Yes □ No ☐ Don’t know / no opinion

If you think this option would increase your tax bill, please tell us what (if anything) you would need to do to be able to pay the increase?

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Do you have any comments on Option 4?

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Housing benefit / council tax support

Many customers who receive housing benefit (HB) also receive council tax support (CTS). Currently some of the rules that affect HB are different from CTS (e.g., backdating rules and family premium rules are less beneficial in HB than CTS). This can make it confusing for customers and more costly for the council to administer.

Q6) Do you think that the council should bring the new council tax support scheme into line with housing benefit legislation?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know / no opinion

Do you have any comments on this?

Council Tax Banding

Q7) Do you agree that the council should restrict payments of council tax support to Band D levels? (this means that if customers live in higher banded properties, Band E and above, they will have their council tax support restricted to the Band D amount).

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know / no opinion

Do you have any comments on this?
Capital / savings

Q8) Do you agree that if customers have over £6,000 in savings they should not be able to claim council tax support?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don’t know / no opinion

Do you have any comments on this?

Any further suggestions

Q9) Please let us know if you have any other suggestions (for example, set a maximum council tax reduction rate other than 70%, 75% or 80%; or alternative suggestions where the council could save money)
About you

What is the first part of your home postcode? (e.g. LE3, LE19, etc)

What is the first part of your work postcode? (e.g. LE3, LE19, etc)

Does your household currently...

☐ receive council tax reduction / support?
☐ pay council tax without council tax reduction / support?
☐ receive a war widow/er’s pension
☐ receive any other benefits?

Does your name appear on the council tax bill for your household?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Don’t know

Are you service personnel (Armed Forces) or ex service personnel?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

How would you best describe your household? (please tick all that apply)

☐ a family with one or two children  ☐ a family with three or more children
☐ a lone parent household  ☐ a single person or couple without children
☐ a carer  ☐ a household that includes a disabled person
☐ a household with full and/or part time workers
☐ other (please specify)
Equalities Monitoring

In order to meet your needs and improve service we need to know a bit more about you. Please help us by completing this form. This information is confidential.

**Ethnic Background** (please tick one only)

- **Asian or Asian British**
  - [ ] Bangladeshi
  - [ ] Indian
  - [ ] Pakistani
  - [ ] Any other Asian background (please specify)

- **Black or Black British**
  - [ ] African
  - [ ] Caribbean
  - [ ] Somali
  - [ ] Any other Black background (please specify)

- **Chinese**
  - [ ] Chinese

- **Dual / Multiple Heritage**
  - [ ] White & Asian
  - [ ] White & Black African
  - [ ] White & Black Caribbean
  - [ ] Any other heritage background (please specify)

- **Gypsy / Romany / Irish traveller**
  - [ ] Gypsy / Romany / Irish traveller

- **Other ethnic group**
  - [ ] Any other ethnic group (please specify)

- **Prefer not to say**

**Age. Are you...**

- [ ] under 16
- [ ] 16 - 24
- [ ] 25 - 34
- [ ] 35 - 44
- [ ] 45 - 54
- [ ] 55 - 64
- [ ] 65 - 84
- [ ] 85+
- [ ] Prefer not to say
Sexual orientation. Do you consider yourself to be...

- Bisexual
- Heterosexual / straight
- Other (please specify)
- Gay / lesbian
- Prefer not to say

How would you describe your religion or belief?

- Atheist
- Hindu
- Sikh
- Bahai
- Jain
- No religion
- Buddhist
- Jewish
- Prefer not to say
- Muslim
- No religion
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months. Since 2005 people with HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis (MS) and severe disfigurement are covered by the DDA.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes
- No

Gender. Are you...

- Female
- Male
- Trans man
- Trans woman
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Thank you for completing this monitoring form. Please return it with your completed questionnaire.

The information you have provided will be kept in accordance with terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and will only be used for the purpose of monitoring. Your details will not be passed on to any other individual, organisation or group.

Leicester City Council is the data controller for the information on this form for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.