

Council Tax Reduction 2022-23 (Earnings Bracket scheme)

A public consultation was held from 7 September 2021 to 18 October 2021. 278 responses were received, following a news story at launch and an email mailshot to 15,000 residents in the city. The email targeted a random sample of residents, including a mixture of those claiming CTR and those who did not. The Community and Voluntary Sector were also consulted in special briefings, as were Revenues and Benefits staff, who are responsible for administering the scheme.

Three open consultation sessions were set up for the Voluntary Sector. Feedback was positive, and encapsulated in some of the points raised by the resultant response from the Moneyworks and Advice Matters partnerships, which is reproduced in full on page 13 of this summary report. It was felt that the earnings bracket approach was much better for clients, as advisors themselves found it difficult to predict if their client would be successful on the old scheme.

Legislation requires the Council to consult with the Police Commission and Fire Authority. The Police & Crime Commissioner had not responded in time for the publication of this report. The Fire Authority did not support the proposals, on the grounds that there would be a permanent reduction in the income they receive from Council Tax in the context of their challenging financial situation. The response from the Fire Authority is reproduced below.

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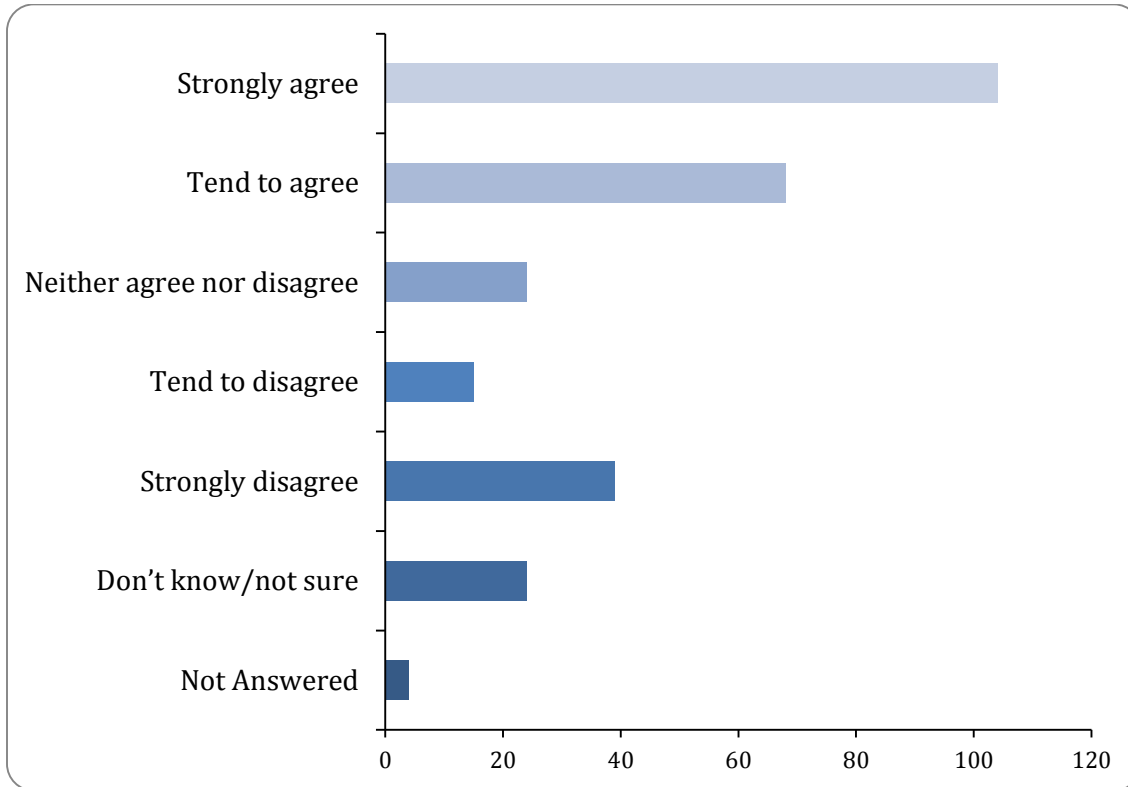
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Q1: Do you agree or disagree that, in principle, the council should align the Council Tax Reduction Scheme with the on-going implementation of Universal Credit?

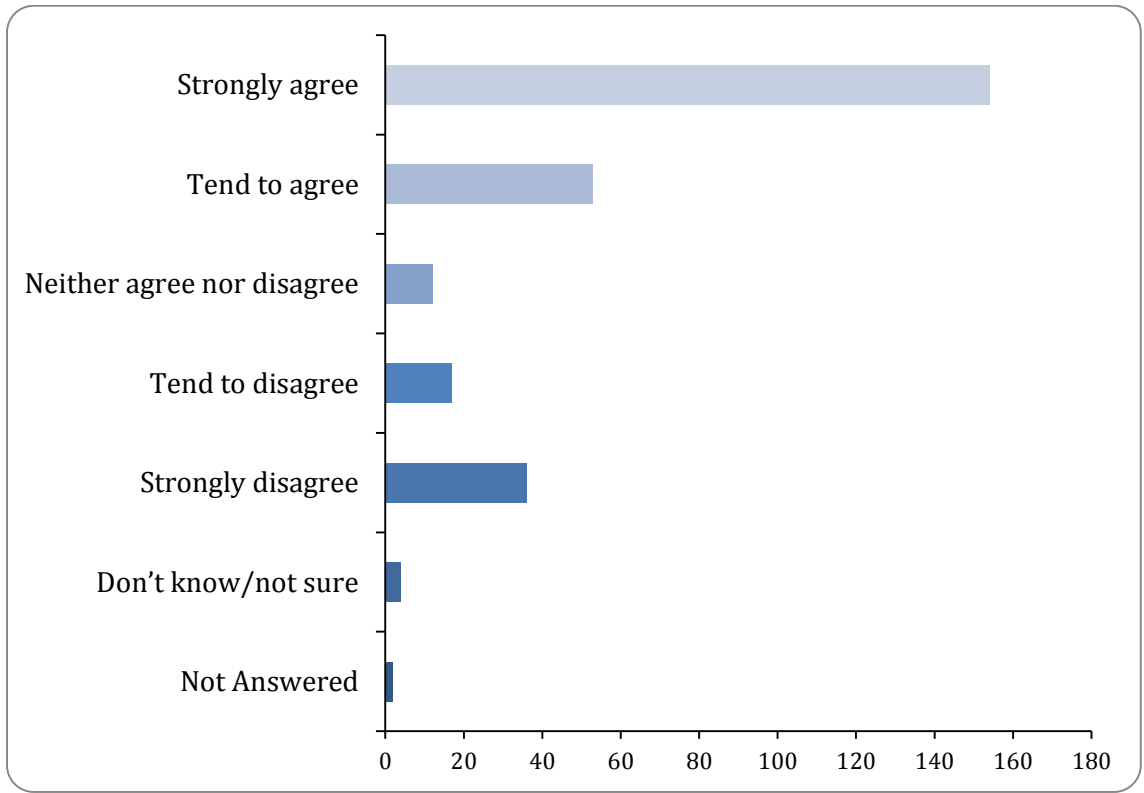
There were 274 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	104	37.41%
Tend to agree	68	24.46%
Neither agree nor disagree	24	8.63%
Tend to disagree	15	5.40%
Strongly disagree	39	14.03%
Don't know/not sure	24	8.63%
Not Answered	4	1.44%

Q2: Do you agree or disagree with making the scheme more supportive to more people?

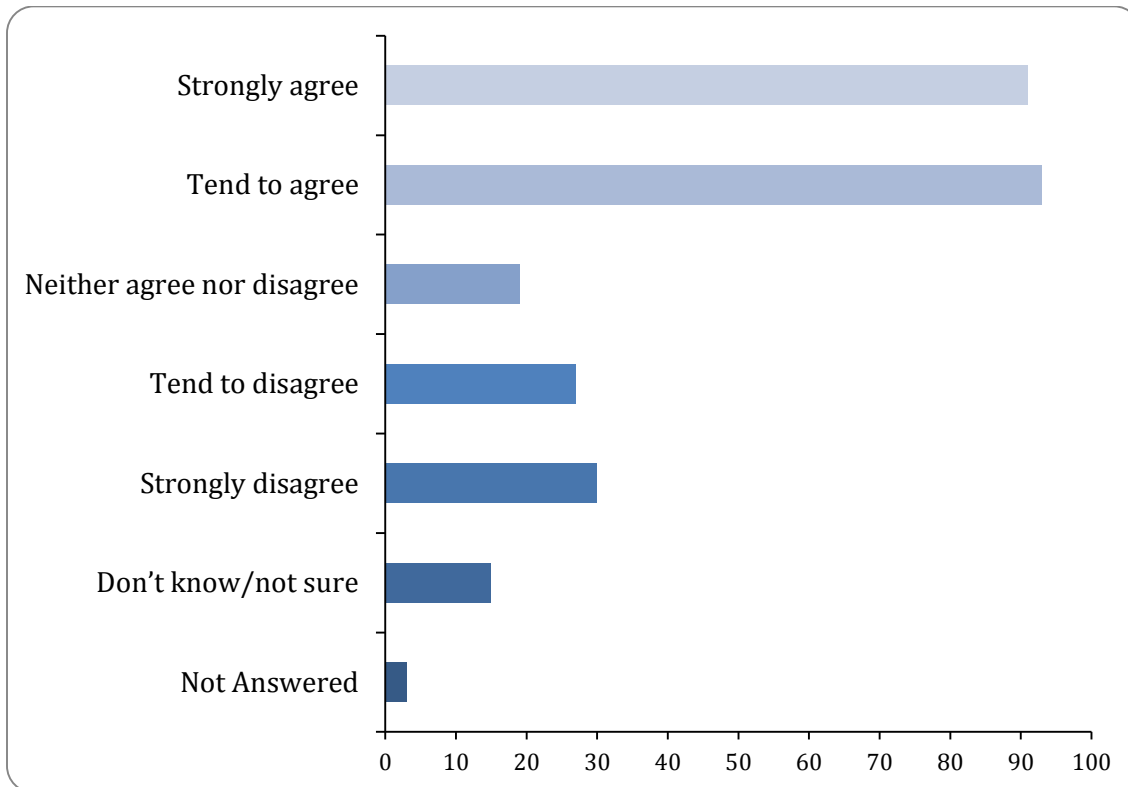
There were 276 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	154	55.40%
Tend to agree	53	19.06%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	4.32%
Tend to disagree	17	6.12%
Strongly disagree	36	12.95%
Don't know/not sure	4	1.44%
Not Answered	2	0.72%

Q3: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal of introducing an earnings bracket scheme for Universal Credit claimants who are claiming Council Tax Reduction?

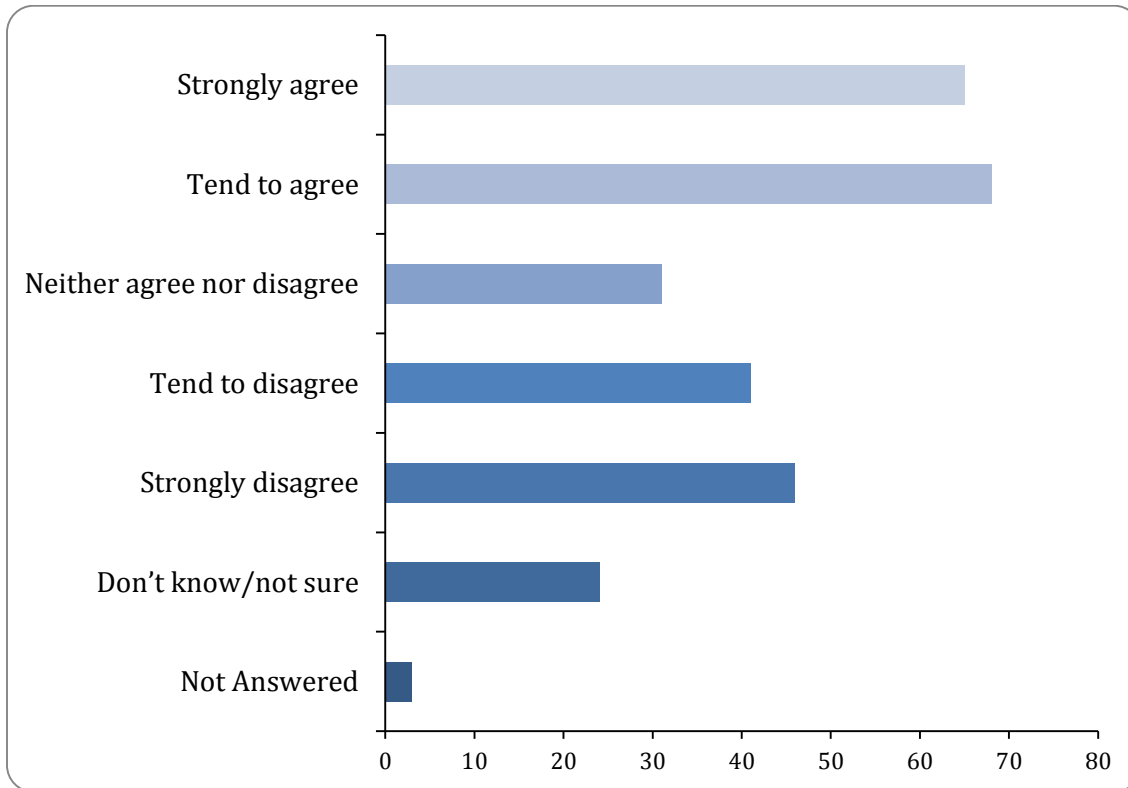
There were 275 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	91	32.73%
Tend to agree	93	33.45%
Neither agree nor disagree	19	6.83%
Tend to disagree	27	9.71%
Strongly disagree	30	10.79%
Don't know/not sure	15	5.40%
Not Answered	3	1.08%

Q4: How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed earnings brackets and discounts?

There were 275 responses to this part of the question.



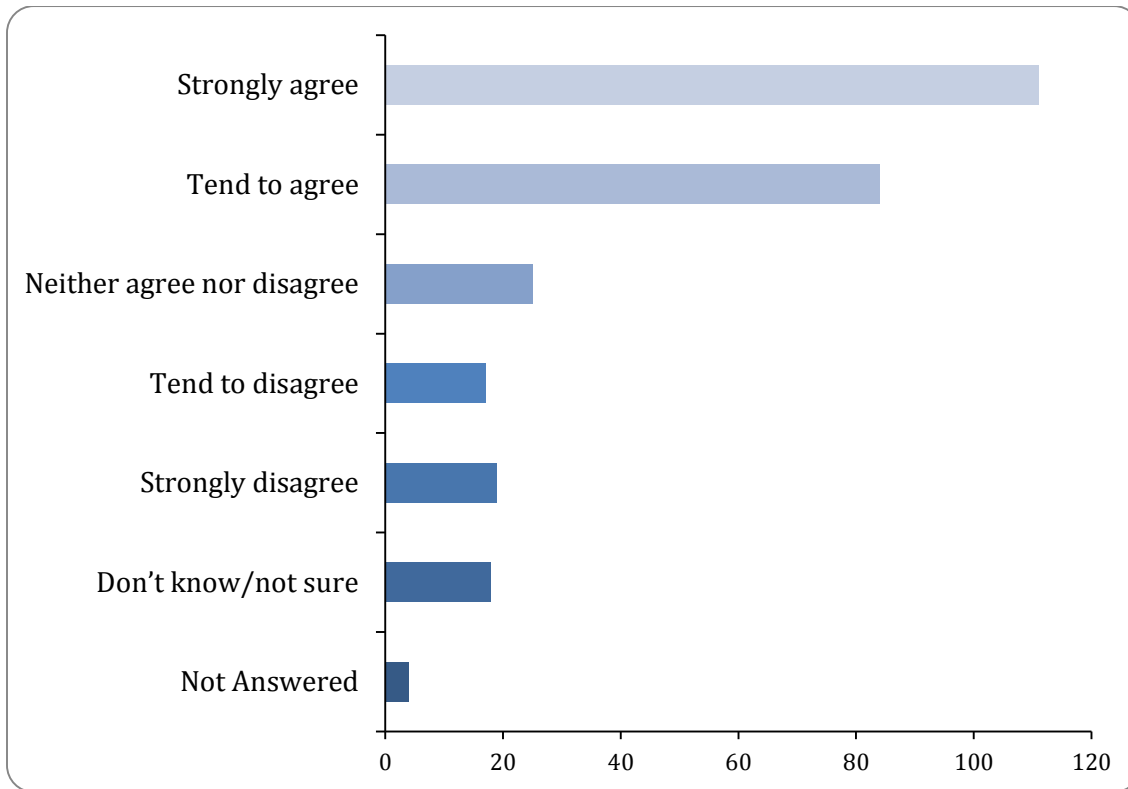
Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	65	23.38%
Tend to agree	68	24.46%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	11.15%
Tend to disagree	41	14.75%
Strongly disagree	46	16.55%
Don't know/not sure	24	8.63%
Not Answered	3	1.08%

Why do you agree or disagree with the proposed earnings brackets and discounts?

There were 144 responses to this part of the question (see the Freeform comments section starting on page xx)

Q5: Do you agree or disagree that we should simplify the rules for non-dependents in the new Universal Credit scheme?

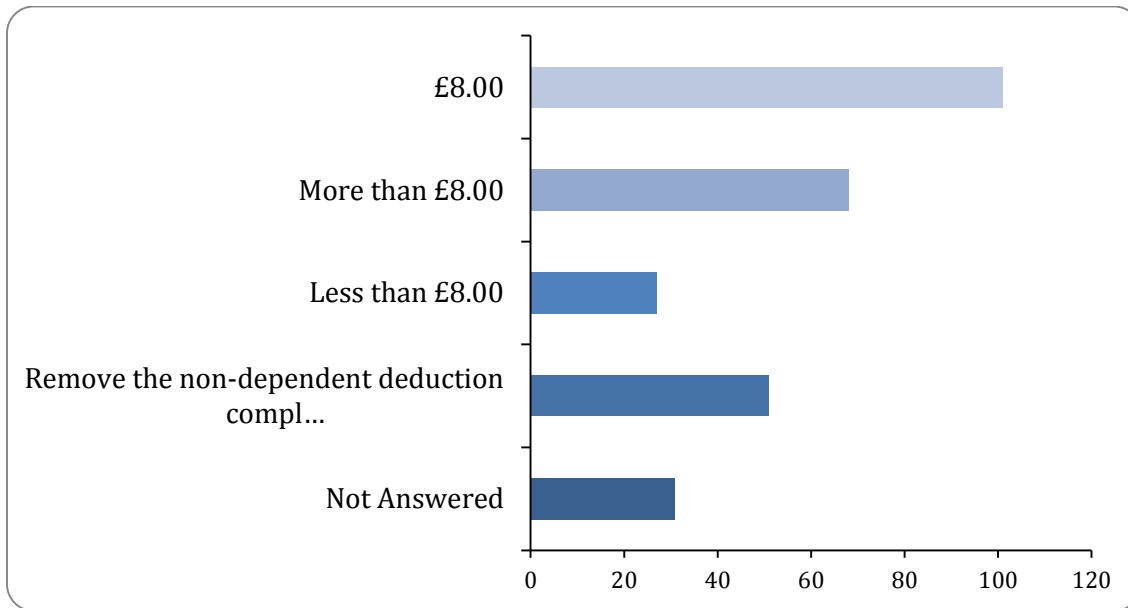
There were 274 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	111	39.93%
Tend to agree	84	30.22%
Neither agree nor disagree	25	8.99%
Tend to disagree	17	6.12%
Strongly disagree	19	6.83%
Don't know/not sure	18	6.47%
Not Answered	4	1.44%

Q6: If we have a single amount for a non-dependent deduction, should it be:

There were 247 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
£8.00	101	36.33%
More than £8.00	68	24.46%
Less than £8.00	27	9.71%
Remove the non-dependent deduction completely (this would cost an additional £80,000)	51	18.35%
Not Answered	31	11.15%

Do you have any further comments about non-dependent deductions?

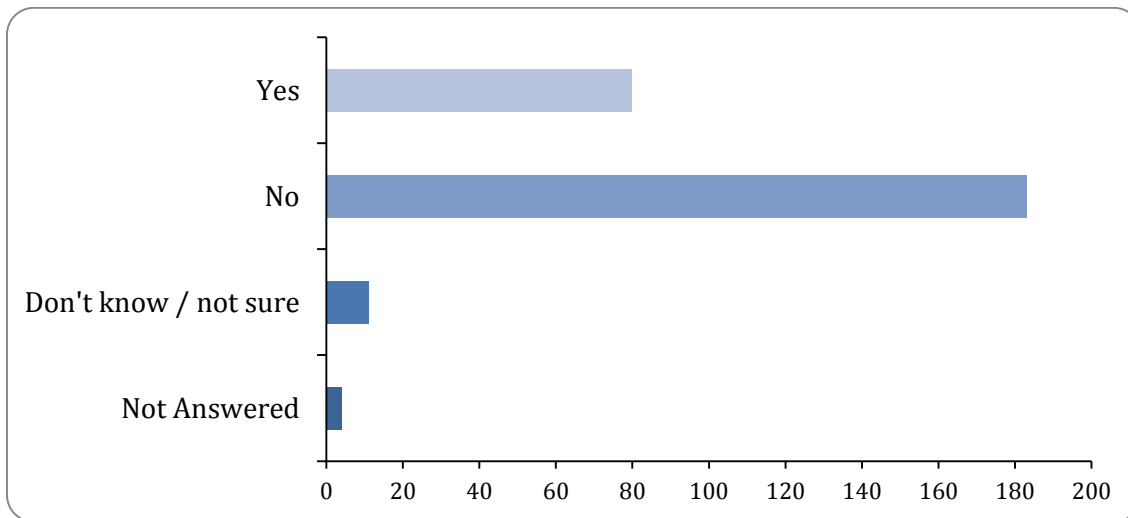
There were 47 responses to this part of the question (see the Freeform comments section starting on page xx)

Q7: Do you have any final comments about the Council Tax Reduction / Earnings Bracket scheme?

There were 118 responses to this part of the question (see the Freeform comments section starting on page xx)

Q7: Have you or someone in your household received Council Tax Reduction in the last two years?

There were 274 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	80	28.78%
No	183	65.83%
Don't know / not sure	11	3.96%
Not Answered	4	1.44%
Don't know /not sure	17	6.12%
Not Answered	4	1.44%

Freeform comments

Across the consultation, there were several opportunities for additional comments to be made. Given the high number of consultation responses, there were a correspondingly high number of comments. These are covered in more detail elsewhere in this report. However, the following shows the most frequently occurring themes appearing in the comments, along with some example comments to represent the theme

Theme	Mentions
<p>Fairness – low earner support welcomed; support those who need it, but people should contribute to society when can afford.</p> <p><i>“It makes sense to help people on very low or no income particularly if they have children and are in receipt of Universal Credit. But as you earn more you are more able to make a contribution to the provision of local services. Nobody likes paying taxes but services we take for granted don't come for free. But we live in a fair society so it is right to help those who find themselves in difficult situations, often through no fault of their own”</i></p>	62
<p>People / I do not have enough income and only just about managing to get by</p> <p><i>“People with very low incomes need help. The cost living rises really hurt. I have been there and sometimes I would limit my use of the kettle as I had very little money left on my pre-paid meter. I would even not put lights on and go to bed to stay warm, this is no way to live.... Being on extremely low income is one causes of my ill health”</i></p>	36
<p>Discount should be higher, or 100% (ie those who have no income should pay less, or nothing)</p> <p><i>“I don't think people with no earnings should have to pay 18% of their council tax as UC is far too low anyway so having to pay CT out of it is unreasonable. I also feel the thresholds are too low to start paying more. However I appreciate that the council has had their funding slashed and are trying to spread the deficit - but it might be better to charge more CT from higher earners to make up the difference”</i></p>	24
<p>Costs too much / impact on other services/ ct bill will be higher / should not cost too much additional funding / council should be more efficient with their spending and services</p> <p><i>“Reduce council tax for everybody. It's already too high and increases every year. As a higher earner, I'm fed up of paying to support others through taxation. Reduce council tax for all income groups. We already support lower income groups through income tax”</i></p>	23
<p>Remove or limit CTR / everyone should contribute by paying most or all of the bill / Disincentivises work / people will want to stay on benefits</p> <p><i>“Why does this even need to be done. Look at the current state of the job market. Employers are begging for staff and yet you are offering more money for people to stay at home. Absolutely crazy”</i></p>	19
<p>Council Tax is too high and/or unaffordable</p> <p><i>“Think cost of living in Brighton and Hove is already very high and most uc claimants are already financially struggling. Our council tax is very expensive as is the rent in the area.”</i></p>	16

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Confused about how the calculations work, or about the question I'm answering	15
Non Dependents should pay something towards the Council Tax <i>"I don't think that it's unreasonable to ask working adult children living in the household to make a contribution to the provision of local services. A single amount simplifies the system whilst ensuring those who can afford it, pay their part."</i>	12
Simplicity of the scheme is welcomed <i>"Seems more straight forward for what I have read on here makes sense less paperwork"</i>	7
Non Deps struggle with their income and cannot easily contribute / they should not pay anything <i>"non-dependant deductions are often unaffordable for non-deps. if they are on a low income £8 per week is a large portion of their income. this expense is rarely collected from the non-dep and expense is often passed on to the main claimant and adds to their hardship. non-dep deductions should be simplified for all working age CTR claims if possible. not just the UC claimants - simplifying the scheme doesn't work if there is one rule for those on UC and another for those not on UC."</i>	7
Proposed scheme / combination of scheme is too complex <i>"I just think it's massively over complicated If you aren't earning very much money-even if your work patterns and income fluctuate you shouldn't have the added stress and worry of ever-fluctuating council tax. It's just one more thing to worry about. There should be a blanket exemption if you're on any level of UC or housing benefit."</i>	6
Would prefer a means-tested scheme, or one that's more sensitive to circumstances <i>"Every situation is different and should be means tested and the level of savings increased as with no reduction savings are used to live off until it is gone. They the claimant will be very poor indeed"</i>	5
It sounds good for admin savings <i>"No it makes sense to me. Seems obvious if it saves funds for hours spent by the council figuring out all these different amounts. Then the funds can be spent where they are needed more."</i>	5
Disability should be reflected more fairly in the scheme <i>"My husband is on a minimum wage and I am registered disabled. We used to get some help with our council tax but we now get nothing. His money has gone up by literally a few pence an hour and we are struggling massively. I think if a household has a disabled person and just a minimum hourly rate we should be entitled to extra help. In the winter months I have to use alot more heating etc which is a struggle because our extra fuel money now has to go on council tax, seems very unfair."</i>	5
Council Tax scheme overall should change (this is outside of the scope of the consultation)	5
Other themes with less than 5 mentions each: Non-dependent deduction can cause friction at home The scheme should incentivise work Please support single people Fraud risk – the council may not be told the full income position of people claiming Fixed non-dep deductions are clearer The bandings need tweaking / there are cliff edges in the scheme	

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Scheme is too simple/ Earnings brackets are too blunt a tool Non-dependent changes should apply to the non-UC scheme as well Recovery processes and Council Tax collection should be improved.	
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Response from Moneyworks and Advice Matters Partnerships:

Summary

The partnership meeting discussed the proposals having attended sessions run by the council on the new scheme which we note only applies if the household is on Universal Credit (all other benefit claimants would be on the old scheme).

We felt that the structure of the new scheme being granted on the basis of net earned income and clear tiers was much better for clients as advisors themselves found it difficult to predict if their client would be successful on the old scheme. (Given comments about the difficulty of understanding the parallel scheme that it would be good to have some council training on the mechanism in order to maximise advisor time on claims that would be more likely to be successful)

We felt that not counting disability benefits as income was very positive for a group of households most likely to be in deep and persistent poverty.

The collections policy is really important and we felt that the intention to behave ethically and prevent debt mounting up for people on the lowest incomes in the city was good but we would recommend the council formalise this by signing up to the national Citizens Advice Council Tax Protocol which can be found here - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/our-work/our-campaigns/all-our-current-campaigns/council-tax-protocol/>

We have some detailed suggestions on the bandings proposed which we outline in the next section but we do feel that a proposal to widen the financial support for poorer households shouldn't create any "losers" and we would recommend reworking the proposal to prevent single people on low incomes being worse off.

Bandings

The council proposes the following:

Earnings refers to money earned from working, whereas income is total money received, including earnings, Universal Credit, benefits and pensions, and so on. The Earnings Brackets are based purely on your net earnings from work, not other income. If you do not work, you have zero earnings.

Here are the proposed net earnings brackets:

	From (£)	To (£)	Amount of bill left to pay
1	0.00	0.00	18%
2	0.01	69.99	20%
3	£70.00	£99.99	40%
4	£100.00	£119.99	60%
5	£120.00	£169.99	80%
6	£170.00	£249.99	90%
7	£250.00	and above	100% (no CTR awarded)

We felt that the difference between band 1 and 2 was so negligible for the council we would recommend costing the net benefit after administration in moving people into band 2 and considering leaving people free to earn up to 69.99 per week without moving banding. Partly to incentivise moving into paid work for people worried about the complexities of managing their budgets.

We had a concern about the difference in income between band 3 and 5 moving a client from 40% liability to 80% liability for potentially earning an additional £20.01 per week. We would recommend that this is reconsidered.

We felt that illustrating the income bandings with net income at minimum wage would be useful in terms of hours worked. We also felt that if the scheme was to be inline with Universal Credit the income disregards relating to your situation might create a simple but still more nuanced approach to people's situations - this list is a helpful guide to those:

"Depending on the type of income or benefits you are getting, some of the money can be ignored when your benefit is worked out. For example, the following are disregarded in the benefit calculation if you are working:

£5 per week of a single person's earnings

£10 per week of a couple's earnings (if at least one works)

£20 per week if you receive a disabled or carer's premium, or the support component of ESA, or are a member of an occupation such as part time fire fighter, territorial army or lifeboat worker

£25 per week for a working lone parent

Some of your working tax credit or earnings will also be disregarded if you work more than 30 hours per week (for example, £17.10 per week is disregarded in the calculation).

Child maintenance is fully disregarded from the benefit calculation (this has been the case since 27 October 2008).

Any disability living allowance and attendance allowance that you receive is also disregarded. If you are a single parent or you are a couple and both work 16 hours or more, or you are a couple and one of you works and the other meets disabled conditions and pay for childcare, we will take that into account when calculating your income. (For example, if you have one child under 15 we will disregard up to £175 from your overall income, and if you have two or more children we will disregard up to £300 from your overall income.) Please note that childcare is disregarded from earned income up until the first Monday in September following your child's 15th birthday or 16th birthday if they are disabled."

In addition we would strongly recommend that like the other coexisting scheme both schemes cap at band D charges for clients. There are very few situations where our clients are in higher bandings but for those situations the hardship created would be devastating. Usually these are households with more children and they are already affected by the benefit cap.

We would also point out that age bandings affect minimum wage values and Universal Credit payments - we would ask that the council consider under 25s having a discount in line with that additional income pressure that young people experience financially.

Non dependent adults

We note that Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove recommend removing the liability for non dependent adults altogether as the revenues raised by this are not significant and the distress caused to the main householder financially and mentally can be tremendous. As a partnership we would seek to develop this point and request that the council consider the cost and benefit of disregarding under 25s. We have mentioned this group in the section above and the fact that their income expectation whether in work or on benefits is more limited than adults over that age. We think that this also would support prevention of youth homelessness through family money stress and relationship breakdown where money is a factor. Our specialist youth advice provider agreed that this would be one of the measures that could support this important outcome.

Ends

The response from the Fire Authority:

East Sussex Fire Authority recognises the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on local communities, particularly, those who are vulnerable, both financially and for other reasons.

As you will be keenly aware, in common with other local authorities the Fire Authority already faces significant financial challenges due both to reductions in Government funding and the impact of Covid-19. Our current Medium Term Finance Plan identifies the potential need to make new savings of up to £4.6m over the next 5 years, in addition to £10.5m already delivered or planned.

Council Tax is our most important funding stream (70% in 2021/22). The Authority will need to take account of any further reduction in council taxbase on its income when considering options for achieving a balanced budget for 2022/23 and beyond. Given the scale of the financial challenge, which cannot be met by efficiencies alone, this may mean that the Authority has to revisit its Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-25 and consider further changes to the service it provides across the communities of East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, including those who are most vulnerable.

On this basis the Fire Authority cannot support BHCC's proposals to change its LCTRS which will lead to a permanent reduction in its income from council tax.

Names were not requested, but if they were provided in the comment, they have been redacted.

**How much do you agree or disagree with the proposed earnings brackets and discounts? -
 Why do you agree or disagree with the proposed earnings brackets and discounts?**

Strongly agree / tend to agree

Fairer

Even though I lose out, I welcome the simplistic focus on earnings over complicated formulas based on the status of a household. This will better support low earners.

It makes sense to help people on very low or no income particularly if they have children and are in receipt of Universal Credit. But as you earn more you are more able to make a contribution to the provision of local services. Nobody likes paying taxes but services we take for granted don't come for free. But we live in a fair society so it is right to help those who find themselves in difficult situations, often through no fault of their own.

Simplified and easier to understand

Good idea, but maybe expand the bracket 1 (18%) to include some very low earnings, say up to £50? You might only earn £20-£30 for a couple of hours work but it equates to 2% of your CT bill

Easier to understand

i am a pensioner as is my wife we have never claimed any discount on our council tax

(you should have put in the table that it was weekly earnings - I thought at first it was monthly and got pretty confused!)

How much will cost to look at people's income that can change each month?

I think council tax should apply to all residents. I think universal credits are an atrocious way to treat the vulnerable in society and is designed to push the poorest even further down. Instead there should be a assessment done taking in account ability and opportunities for each individual. Council tax should be something every one pays out of what ever their income is (benefits or salary). That way perhaps more people would respect what the council tax covers.

Although as I understand, it will cost the council more, in the long run it's a much fairer system and will help more people the most in need of that help and support.

Good match to uc brackets

It seems like a fair distribution of assistance

They are a help rather than a dependancy

Those with low incomes cannot afford the tax, especially when many are facing huge increases in fuel and food costs

Treats people more fairly

I just think that those earning less should pay less

I believe that people on higher earnings should pay higher council taxes Including people on higher benifits.

Because its fairer and more helpful to people on low or no incomes

UC is an in work benefit and those persons on the minimum wage need support as do those persons who are not working but will see there is support available if they start work. The one bill, excluding rent, CT is a large cost and stops people from taking work as they can end up being worse off. Although this will cost more to the council, long term this could benefit everyone as hopefully more people will go into work and potentially pay 100% of their CT. Any help to the cost of living should be welcomed as the cost of living is going up plus

any incentive to move people into work is good planning. There are a percentage of people who will always be fully supportive this is part of community, society and democracy we live in.

I think the poorer in our society should be supported.

I am concerned that this is about saving admin costs, rather than actually helping people - call me cynical

More people on low incomes should be helped by richer people.

You seem to be trying to be fair

It's a good idea for people to pay according to their living income rather than a set rate which may be out of reach in their budget

It seems fair and more should be done to help low income families.

Encouraging saving.

I have been out of a job since <<redacted>>. My husband left me the same week and does not support me financially. I currently pay £282 per month and am running out of savings. What happens if I can't get a job in my profession or have to take something lower paid and can't cover my utilities and council tax???

If no income is earned surely you would have 100% CTR. Many families are in trouble financially and one of the problems is that they must find 18% of their Council Tax Bill from the other benefits they receive.

because the tax is too high

Because it is a fairer uniform way of apportioning realistic earnings (net income) against council tax. It links in a more equitable way to ability to pay benefiting households with proportionate support.

My only concern is a percentage of Zero earners are not there by choice, sadly there will be those that are by choice. Those that cannot work are reducing their benefits to support the small few that can earn.

The council tax payment should be based on your earnings fully, paying more the higher earners. There will be mother's who claim tax credits, are these taking into consideration to pay less council tax?.. I strongly agree council tax bills are too high indeed for the average earner.

Make the system fairer to everyone involved

People on lower incomes need greater support

We need to help those who have nil or little income. The cut-off point would depend on their situation and not just their incomes.

I think it would be fair if these brackets are put in place and apply to anyone on universal credit, not just people renting. At the moment homeowners are exempt.

People with very low incomes need help. The cost living rises really hurt. I have been there and sometimes I would limit my use of the kettle as I had very little money left on my pre-paid meter. I would even not put lights on and go to bed to stay warm, this is no way to live. now I am on PIP due <<health conditions redacted>>. Being on extremely low income is one cause of my ill health.

I feel Brighton is a supportive community and with the reduction in universal credit and price rises in bills we should be doing all we can to counter the cruel Tory policy decisions that are making it hard for people to manage and live!

I am earning <<redacted>>£/month as single mom with 2, a monthly rent of <<redacted>>£, and now have to pay 175£/month for Council Tax PLUS all the rest... I agree with Anything that cancels that impossible tax I cannot define pay!

If it is not manageable to assess total income then any form of increased support and distribution to those that need it makes sense to me.

the proposal is reasonable. My understanding, If more reduction is offered, the gap has to be bridged from somewhere. It is going to be difficult to attract funding from the central government.

Seems more straight forward for what I have read on here makes sense less paperwork

I don't think people with no earnings should have to pay 18% of their council tax as UC is far too low anyway so having to pay CT out of it is unreasonable. I also feel the thresholds are too low to start paying more.

However I appreciate that the council has had their funding slashed and are trying to spread the deficit - but it might be better to charge more CT from higher earners to make up the difference

Hello,

My main point of contention with the the current CTR and proposed CTR scheme is the 18% charge made for people who have no earning whatsoever. An unemployed single person receives £72.00 per week in Universal Credit plus their rent money.

The Government stipulates that this is the minimum amount of money that an individual needs to live on in the United Kingdom: so how then, in good conscience, can anyone take away a portion of this money?

It is at the thinnest edge of the wedge were any reduction in income is felt and experienced most acutely. The poorer you are the more value every pound has, so to charge a person £180 - £200 pounds per year for Council Tax when all they have is £72.00 per week is shameful. That's roughly 3 weeks, of their, income!

It would, therefore, be my opinion that the 18% charge (or any charge) for those with no earnings be scrapped altogether as not to do so is to drive the poorest in society into abject poverty.

Thank You,

<<name redacted>>

Hove Resident

It seems fair in principle.

I suppose if I understand properly that this can help a lot the people special in this difficult time

currently, too many people who are higher earners are benefitting from ctr. they are not struggling. they dont need to have a discount

It seems fairer for all with a wider spread of fairer discounts. If I've understood it correctly!

I live in a rented flat and the rent is so high and my wages is the minimum, single mum with 3 kids. I cant save for anything. I can't afford to go to the dentist.

Seem proportionate.

I believe in socialism.

I believe it is a fairer scheme than previously

This is a tough balance between the additional cost to the Council, when their budgets are so tight, whilst providing support to those in need. The proposed levels look reasonable as a start, and also mean that the scheme can be flexed in future to suit the Council Budget i.e. the brackets can be raised and lowered.

If people are receiving UC, they cannot meet their daily expenses so it is reasonable to receive CTR as well.

The coucil tax has to be fair.

The seem fair enough

This will save on admin costs and the brackets are quite close. As with universal credit, if people earn more they become more self sufficient.

Many areas Brighton are areas of deprivation, Poverty is departmental to people and their family's health. More help is needed for these people as it is a trap, they do not know to get out off, money is very big issue and every penny counts. So, any increase could be a crisis for these families. Moreover, help us who work in these communities.

<<name redacted>>

On Your Way jobclubs and Digital Inclusion for the elderly

I just want things to be easier for people on UC - life is hard enough with that little money!!

I am not fully sure how this will affect people, but it seems to be generally beneficial and trust that you have looked carefully at choosing the levels. Presumably this will need to change again if there are any changes in the UC scheme

They are graduated. If your examples are representative, in most people cases will be the same or better off. Consideration should be given to circumstances where people will be worse off and whether any changes could or should be made to mitigate this.

I believe we each have a right to a 'minimum income' and that this minimum should be preserved for the 'long term potential' of their situation, at all costs - including the repayment of debt/s. That is to say that the minimum income should consider an individual's long term potential to exist on such an income, as they may have no potential to increase their income. A Higher Tax Bracket, for those who fall into an 'abnormally high' income, should pay higher Tax.

Everyone needs a stake in society and to maintain the habit of paying bills.

Strongly disagree/ tend to disagree

Who earns 0 should pay 0
why bother working?!

I just think it's massively over complicated
If you aren't earning very much money-even if your work patterns and income fluctuate you shouldn't have the added stress and worry of ever-fluctuating council tax. It's just one more thing to worry about. There should be a blanket exemption if you're on any level of UC or housing benefit.

People on UC are already struggling and should have their council tax reduced by 100%, especially now that they have lost the extra £20 per week from the covid increase to payments.

They get enough benefits. Get a job

I think property owners should pay council tax instead of the renters, who can barely afford to keep up with rising rent prices in the city. Make people on Universal Credit and low incomes exempt and tax houses with combined incomes above 100,000 + property owners owning more than 1 property more.

This means that there is even more pressure on the middle class to pay council tax (which automatically increases by 4% every year) only to have resources reduced even further.

I have no confidence in any decision B&H Council makes. The 360 donut, waste collection service, silly covid cycle lanes, absence of services throughout covid. Lazy good for nothings.

Scheme does not take into account low incomes who are not on U.C.

Other income should be taken into account

Threshold set too low

It should be high for more people on lower paid incomes.

People who are on Universal Credit and also working should pay Council Tax relative to what their household income is. People who work full time pay 100% of the rising taxes as services close and become less effective. Employed people claiming UC should also pay their fair share towards this, not have the bracket increased.

Why just for people on universal credit. I am retired and living on my pension. I should have a discount. Worked all my life never claimed any benefits.

1. To reach the objective of being simpler and clearer, the number of brackets under the new system should be reduced i.e. 5 brackets altogether (0% - 25% - 50% - 75% - 100%) or 5 brackets for CTR (20% brackets: 0/20/40/60/80 and everyone else 100%).
2. To be even fairer, there is the option to proportionally increment brackets so the poorest are supported the most, capturing more people at the bottom of the higher bracket range i.e. 0% for more people under a 5-bracket system, with the next range only 10%, then 20%, then 50%. and the upper bracket 80 or 90%.
3. Given that there are potential changes to national tax (NI contributions) for all wages on the way, and potential changes to UC and other systems, is this the best time to link CTR to net earnings and

savings?

4. It is unclear whether assets are accounted for in the formula - if not, maybe they should in the same way savings are (being cash poor is not true if you have lots of assets) to prevent abuse of the system.

Every situation is different and should be means tested and the level of savings increased as with no reduction savings are used to live off until it is gone. They the claimant will be very poor indeed

I Don't Believe That There Should Be A Earnings Bracket As Just Because You Are Outside Of The Bracket Doesn't Mean That You Don't Need Extra Help With Council Tax Especially Due To How People Are Really Struggling With Covid. Council Tax Reductions Should Be Available To Anyone Who Needs It Regardless Of The Amount Of Benefit They Get.

I object to the scheme and therefore the underlying details of the scheme

Because I'm a single person who works full time

By the time I have paid my c.tax /rent and all my other bills Im left with not being able to buy food shopping or even my travel to and fro to work its unfair I can't get any help

A person living by their selves paya the same amount as a family. It is unfairly weighted

The people earning more than 250 a week are still on very low earnings.

As people who are working hard again will have to cover the bills of the people who are sitting at home doing nothing apart of claiming benefits. It is so unfair

The higher earnings should get less help people that worse off need more help

The brackets are still not simple enough and include cliff edges, I. E. Someone earning one penny more than another person might pay considerably more council tax than them - meaning that they would be penalised for working more and potentially be worse off by working more.

Put simply as an employer that cannot get staff because no one will apply then it is quite obvious that it suits people far better financially to stay at home you should be investing in getting people back to work, not giving them more money to stay at home.

I am a landlord and I have first hand knowledge of how this happening.

The Council cannot afford to maintain the city now, due to it's mismanagement. Why should Council tax payers subsidise others, when we do not even get the service we need.

This is nothing more than another tax !!

If you got no job, eating and paying the rent should be priorities. Thus, people can still struggle to pay 18%.

Paying such high % of such low wages means the poorest in the city will be paying the biggest % of of their net income on council tax. In Brighton your neighbour could be a barrister earning £100,000 + pa and pays the same council tax. It disproportionately affects those least able to afford it and yes council tax is important but look how much is wasted in administration due to no joined up thinking. Why look at it once a year when P60's are issued and Adjust to account for over payments and underpayments. With the excessive admin and rate of arrears its probably not even breaking even. If Brightons poorest need to risk sacrificing nutrition to pay council tax at least least it should have a positive effect of the city's finances. Dont expect people to go hungry so the money they could have spent on food goes into a black hole of bureaucratic administrative waste. I guess the poorest can just eat cake.

It means that people earning more than £250 like me will not get any help with my council tax and since I am earning a reduced wage because of Covid-19, I need the help because I live on my own so I think anybody who is single and living alone should get at least some assistance in paying the council tax.

The earnings brackets feel restrictive i. e. £250 and above is zero CTR.

I run a business in the city and we are in dire need of staff and people who want and need to WORK.... there are jobs out there and people should find work rather than expect to be bailed out constantly by others and the state.

They should not result in an overall increase in costs.

Reduce council tax for everybody.

It's already too high and increases every year. As a higher earner, I'm fed up of paying to support others through taxation. Reduce council tax for all income groups. We already support lower income groups through income tax.

My husband is on a minimum wage and I am registered disabled. We used to get some help with our council tax but we now get nothing. His money has gone up by literally a few pence an hour and we are struggling massively. I think if a household has a disabled person and just a minimum hourly rate we should be entitled to extra help. In the winter months I have to use a lot more heating etc which is a struggle because our extra fuel money now has to go on council tax, seems very unfair.

It should always be about giving more to people with low income or who rely on the benefits system. How about helping these people to get out of the benefits system by supporting them to return to work and do their bit for the council.

Low earners with children struggle to make ends meet. The proposed discounts don't look low enough to make much difference to the lives of low earners.

The income brackets for people on minimum wage are too low before they pay the full council tax.

I think the brackets are way too low and don't represent the costs of living in the area. If you're spending money to rework the system, make it a substantial improvement for people - nobody cares about a saving of a couple of quid a week. And if they do, those people clearly aren't in a position to pay council tax at all and need further relief.

We can't afford it people to take responsibility for their expenses (excluding disabled people etc) We are now looking at another 5% rise in our council tax and the current services are shocking discounts could be more generous for low income earners

Seems to be very low and I am not averse to helping those in genuine need

If people are in receipt of benefits they should be exempt from paying council tax. Linking the scheme to work is a disincentive for lower paid people to work.

1000 per month is a very low income considering post brexit inflation. My wages have decreased over the last 20 years whilst prices have skyrocketed for food.

People should take responsibility for their own finances if they benefit from council services then they should pay their share

i think the discounts are too generous

ALL UC CLAIMANTS SHOULD GET DISCOUNT COUNCIL TAX IS WAY TOO EXPENSIVE EVEN FOR WORKING CLASS

single person households should not be paying the same as multi persons household

People with no income should pay no council tax

I think that by adjusting the council tax system to help more people, we are just making the whole benefit system even more attractive to people who do not feel the need to work. We already have a system where people will not work because it affects the benefits that they receive for not going to work and some have an attitude that why should they do work and not receive more money for doing so.

on a personal level I get a single person discount but earn a reasonable salary. it always feels like those earning have to subsidise those who decide to have many children and can't afford them. I am really careful with money hence have savings. maybe I am wrong but I see too many low income families with habits and children they can't afford.

The percentage rate to pay for still low earnings is too high for those earning between £70-£120. National Insurance rates are going up, energy bill costs are rising and the price of food is increasing. These things need to be taken into account.

Increases more taxes on top of what we are paying now

Even on the highest bracket of income family's will struggle to find the amount. I know priorities take precedence which would be rent and food first, i think family's would get behind with this amount of council tax. Myself on a low income always cut food cost to pay bills. There is already child poverty in the city. This scheme will increase that.

7 brackets is too unwieldy

I only disagree with any preferential treatments when a) the person has not attempted to get a job and b) When their property is anything other than on the lowest banding for council tax.

If their property is on the lowest banding and they are in work I agree with some support.

Should pay 100 per cent

I agree with the proposal that it should reflect earnings, however the 'taper ' should be higher, allowing people to effectively kwwp more of their earnings, otherwise working more hours will have little effect on overall income

As someone on a very low income that ..gets the discount if my council tax was to go up up I'd really struggle ..I'm already having to get universal credit help with full time job and am struggling since they took covid help out ..I agree there should be more support but in crease of tax for low income homes is not the answer

Because with my husbands ill health and implemented retirement due to his cause we are on an income/earnings restricted money pot. We have used all 3 benefits calculators online and even though it stipulates we are entitled to CTR according to you and the housing benefit team we are not why? Because you have been privy to a UC statement which indicates nil payment so you think we are not entitled to anything. Well we have never applied for benefits in our entire working careers until now and I am disgusted with the treatment and no support.

If the proposed scheme would cost more & come out of the councils budget. Would that mean that the council tax would go up, meaning my council tax would go up. I personally would not qualify for the scheme, but I still have to carefully budget to ensure I can afford monthly bills etc.

Anyone who receives UC should be given some kind of discount. As UC claimants tend to be earning less money in full and most likely to have health issues preventing them from higher-paying jobs.

People on the lowest income shouldn't be paying council tax at all. Get the tax from the rich people. Or better yet Boris and his mates. EAT. THE. RICH.

Everyone should pay the full amount, if you can't afford it move house. Why should the rich subsidise the poor?

The jump in council tax due compared to the amount earned is totally unbalanced.

My take-home pay is £<<redacted>> per month, leaving me with c. £400 for all expenses, such as food, clothing, travel, etc, after bills have been paid. <<age and date redacted>> and currently work 3 days a week for <<redacted>>. It would be almost impossible for me to secure a new full-time job as there is a question on application forms: "Are you over 64-and-a-half?" I can't retire until I'm 66. Energy bills are going up, the cost of living increases constantly, and NI will go up in April 2022. How can I manage?

Earnings brackets are a blunt tool. They do not account for specific circumstances such as the additional costs of living and ability to earn income through work of

being a carer

being a lone parent

being a parent of a disabled child

Disability

Impacted by the bedroom tax.

Having additional reductions in the scheme for people in specific circumstances such as these would go some way to mitigate the bluntness of an earnings bracket. We note that whilst benefits are disregarded, the additional costs of living for disabled people and people with long term health conditions aren't taken into account.

Neither agree nor disagree / unsure or don't know

it is hard to have an idea of if the brackets and discount amounts make sense without financial examples based on the brackets and how they reflect for amounts for each council tax band to know what they would translate to in financial terms.

what people earn on paper is not what they have in their pocket each month,

You should think about the people who are moving from Universal credit to a job and have previous debts will have more debts with a minimum work which also means that they need help and not the payment of a total of 100% as you stabilize it in some of your examples

I cannot make sense of all the information. It seems helpful if you are on Universal Credit. But what if you are not, will you have to pay more? In that case I would not favour it. Will there still be single person discount? As a single person not on universal credit I would not favour this scheme if it would cost more for me. Council tax is already very high. However I agree in principle with making it easier for people on low incomes I think only people on very high incomes , ie 80k plus should pay more as a result of any changes.

I am concerned about this as there are many people who are just meeting the minimum when they are not entitled to any benefits and they have to pay full taxex. And after all taxex they have even less than those who don't pay or have theyr taxex reduced. And those who get benefits are living on the others accounts.

Think cost of living in Brighton and Hove is already very high and most uc claimants are already financially struggling. Our council tax is very expensive as is the rent in the area.

I don't think anyone on universal credit should pay council tax

There are issues around what people declare that they earn (say, on PAYE) and what they actually earn (e.g. cash in hand).

Whilst the above earnings brackets for CTR and the point at which a household must pay most or all of their Council Tax suggests that we should allow those households to earn more before they pay, say, 80% or 100% of their Council Tax, this is problematic because some households earn cash in hand. On reflection therefore the earnings brackets are probably reasonable as they are.

Not fully understood

The tax brackets are so uneven anyway . Some property's are not in my opinion in the correct bracket but system is old!

In the same respect just because your in a certain area doesn't mean you can pay the same amount of tax as your neighbours as we all have different circumstances

For me if it was done by earnings it would be a lot fairer to people on benefits

Is this based on weekly income? (Sorry, that's not clear.)

I am not in a situation in which I could judge if the the proposed discounts would be enough for those affected by the change.

This is hugely complex and multiple factors involved. Sceptical as many get benefits who shouldn't, and many more should be working more. This needs to be very robust and carefully analysed by claimant. FT taxpayers bear the brunt for it all, so we need cast iron guarantees that the right and thorough checks are in place.

I have no idea how these figures can be fairly arrived at.

If we have a single amount for a non-dependent deduction...: - Do you have any further comments about non-dependent deductions?

Strongly agree / tend to agree

It shouldn't be scrapped entirely, but as non-dependent residents are likely to be low earners by virtue of living with a UC claimant, a fixed amount to deduct from CTR would be welcome and easily understood. Also, assessing income of non-claimants is invasive and shouldn't be necessary but they also must contribute something.

non-dependant deductions are often unaffordable for non-deps. if they are on a low income £8 per week is a large portion of their income. this expense is rarely collected from the non-dep and expense is often passed on to the main claimant and adds to their hardship.

non-dep deductions should be simplified for all working age CTR claims if possible. not just the UC claimants - simplifying the scheme doesn't work if there is one rule for those on UC and another for those not on UC.

I don't think that it's unreasonable to ask working adult children living in the household to make a contribution to the provision of local services. A single amount simplifies the system whilst ensuring those who can afford it, pay their part.

the single amount should, at minimum, be the National Living Wage of £8.91. If someone isn't even earning this, they don't have money spare for council tax.

This is assuming the non dependant is working and are on minimal wage which is lower than £8. The national insurance rise next year needs to be taken into account

if they are earning ok money they should contribute more and not be a liability to the rest of us

Nothing if living with parent as they already pay c tax

This question is very confusingly worded.

This is such a difficult question to answer. I think young people who are working need to understand responsibility and help support their family. Lone parents struggle as do 2 parent families, asking their young adults to contribute could result in arguments the parent/S paying saving disagreements or the parent/s asking their young adults to leave the family home, this could then put more pressure on the council to rehouse these young adults. I've wavered over the fixed £8 it's fraught but with education/media climate change I do think young people understand. Perhaps where this cost is applied a separate letter should be sent to the young person explaining why they need to pay

Money doesn't grow on trees and the council doesn't get enough help from central government

Multiple occupancy households have a greater demand on council services which are already subsidised by council tax payers

All working adults should have a responsibility to pay towards Council Services.

I don't think I understand the current system enough to comment on this, so ignore this answer

If it is possible to raise it say 10 and then allow for slippage as well as possible cases where circumstances mean it was possible to let deserving people exclude themselves from the payment, that makes sense.

It's good that B and H are trying to reduce admin and help the poorest even if it is by small amounts.

If the person is actively looking for work, then he/she deserve deduction

Only think it's right if you work you pay your share

Non dependants is a confusing term even after it's explained as lodgers are not non dependants but are unrelated adults

I believe that council tax should not be for the amount of people in any property, it should be charged on the property and nothing else.

No

No

Due to extreme financial stress the non-dependent may be told to leave as a result an extra homeless person for the council to deal with and extra much more costs involved

Of course anyone living as a non dependent must pay. Sharing someones home must be sharing the cost and paid with rent

I do feel that non dependent residents need to contribute to the overall housing costs and that £8.00 a week is a manageable amount.

This issue is them paying it and not putting the financial load on the main resident.

Possibly introduce a discretionary assesment for cases where the non dependent reduction causes hardship so that households can apply to remove it if needed

It's not fair in some cases I have for example a son ages 22 and can not work because he as PTSD he is having treatment but this can take years

It is a shame that these benefits have to be so complicated. I am not sure what level is fair or appropriate

The amount could be raised to a manageable amount whilst maintaining enough pressure to incentivise personal responsibility.

I am of the opinion that the underlying focus should be to encourage work. So, keep the deductions as small as possible.

The impact this deduction can have on households, family relationships and mental health can be very substantial. The funds raised by this deduction are not a great amount and on balance removing this deduction will have a greater beneficial impact for our clients.

Strongly disagree / tend to disagree

i have 2 children with disabilities that do not work, as they are <<age redacted>>, i think that parents that have children with disabilities should not have to pay the full council tax amount each month.

Reducing the current cost for non dependents will increase the cost burden to the council and potentially affect other services.

I think working people should contribute.

We should have a deduction of more than £8.00 because it would help people who are out of work to contribute to the council tax.

It sounds as though the proposal to reduce the non-dependent deduction is based almost purely on simplification of the system.

A non-dependent who is earning should absolutely contribute to the household budget. To remove the requirement for them to do so, suggests to that individual that being self-reliant is not required in our society. If a non-dependent is bringing £300 per week into the household the current deduction of £14.90 is a very modest contribution.

You should make more effort to enforce payment of council tax punctually.

I BELIEVE IF A HOUSEHOLD HAS 3 PEOPLE THEY SHOULDNT GET ANY DISCOUNT IF NON DEPENDED IS WORKING

Not really sure why removing a deduction costs the council more

No

Neither agree nor disagree / unsure or don't know / no answer

No

No idea

No I have a non dependent living with me who doesn't work pays no rent and doesn't claim benefit I should get sum help

not sure

This is the most confusing survey I have ever done!

That's too confusing so I need to pass. I'm not exactly simple minded but 2nd reading of that was more confusing than first so no idea. Not risking a third go at the riddle.

I don't really gave an opinion any more

Who lives in the house is immaterial, I agree with the single occupant reduction but a reduction based on who is earning again penalises those who earn and support themselves.

Do you have any final comments about the Council Tax Reduction / Earnings Bracket scheme?

- Q7

comments from those who strongly agreed/tended to agree with making the scheme more supportive

Landlords should contribute to the economy of the Council when they rent out. Also the empty property CT relief should be abolished

Strongly support this scheme.

I don't support the CT/CTR system. The rich should be paying much more and low earners nothing at all. Overall, I support the changes as better than before, but it still entrenches and will continue to allow the expansion of the economic oppression of the working class. Progressive Council Tax announced a few years back seemed a much better way to go but the officers failed to advise to test the idea in court, and councillors voted against taking the small risk of legal testing. The council needs to be far more legally imaginative to force funds from the wealthy to alleviate the burden on those with little or no wealth.

though you are attempting to simplify the scheme. the fact that there will be a different scheme for pensioners, working age on UC and working age not on UC means that it seems like in many ways it will make it more complicated rather than less.

it seems especially unfair that non-dep deductions will be different for the different schemes - can there just be one scheme for working age people regardless of if they are on UC?

will the capital limit of £6000 be scrapped for those on the new scheme? again, the difference between these different schemes seems unfair and over complicated.

please build in some transitional protection for those that are worse off under the new scheme.

does this proposed new scheme discriminate against larger families who would usually have a higher applicable amount which would factor in their higher expenses as a result of having more children - so the bracket scheme doesn't benefit them as they are treated the same as a single person even though their cost of living would be much higher?

I fully support the proposed changes.

Thank you for the survey and the opportunity to participate and provide feedback to support the Council to make more informed decisions about the views of residents.

parents with disabled children or disabled adults living with them should get a reduction on their council tax, it is hard enough without having to find extra money when we have so much extra money to pay out as it is

Has anyone actually worked out how much difference it would make to cut out ALL the bureaucracy and blanket exempt people who are at the poorest end of society and don't need any more stress in their life

Charging Council Tax to people on UC makes no sense. They are being sent money that they must then send back. UC is already barely enough to get by on now that the covid bonus has been removed (which should be reinstated as standard), and having to lose a large chunk of it to council tax, especially when you have little control over what council tax code area you are living in, due to UC being so low you cant easily move house, is unfair, and can make life near unliveable.

Council tax keeps going up for the average household who just about manage to scrape by in this city. Why not tax wealthy property developers/land owners a bit more for the good of the community?

You should think about the people who are moving from Universal credit to a job and have previous debts will have more debts with a minimum work which also means that they need help and not the payment of a total of 100% as you stabilize it in some of your examples

A lot of low earners could be receiving no U.C. your scheme would be better to help low earners who are not on benefits or not on many benefits

<p>People raising children in a place where money is very low and old age pension should be allowed more money off as there is so much too pay for and so little money</p>
<p>The whole UC scheme is badly designed anyway. A couple of quid per week will not drastically change the life of people on UC. Surely some of them should be exempt full stop.</p>
<p>I pay same amount of council tax as someone working and earning thousands of pounds. I am single on a pension getting 25 per cent discount. Why not give me more of a discount.</p>
<p>It seems to be that this scheme would make it more affordable to contribute to society. It does make it quite irritating for anyone making more money.</p>
<p>It is unclear how much the proposals will affect council tax for others at a time when everyone faces significant downward pressures on household budgets and before the knowledge of Spending Review allocations to councils after suffering covid impacts on budgets.</p>
<p>The change to CTR should proportionately reflect changes to council tax for most tax bands as even for middle earners the annual 5% increases over the past couple of years have massive impact on affordability.</p>
<p>Given that there are potential changes to national tax (NI contributions) for all wages on the way, and potential changes to UC and other systems, is this the best time to link CTR to net earnings and savings?</p>
<p>It is unclear whether assets are accounted for in the formula - if not, maybe they should in the same way savings are (being cash poor is not true if you have lots of assets) to prevent abuse of the system.</p>
<p>I am a single parent and work 18 hours per week. Due to my hourly rate I hardly qualify for a lot. My daughter is at uni so doesn't work but as she is a non dependent I get nothing for her.</p>
<p>It's a scheme that has been needed since the change in the benefits system. I wish you luck and hope it succeeds.</p>
<p>I would appreciate some financial help towards my council tax as I don't earn enough to feed myself but I do pay all my bills</p>
<p>It looks basically ok. It should be a help not a major reduction</p>
<p>Would the earning bracket scheme run along side the single person's discount?</p>
<p>There are many luxury homes and people who can afford more on their Council tax, this tax is a heavier burden to those on state benefits or have low or no income</p>
<p>The Council needs to do more in order to align the schemes, but this should not result in the Scheme costing more because the Council needs to remove the administrative loops the misalignment has created. If there is a problem, pouring money into it usually does not help fix the root causes. The Council also needs to consider that reduction in the overall budget affects all residents - perhaps those in need the most, hence it should be more thoughtful in how additional money is being spent on the Scheme that could have been spent elsewhere. Admin processes can be improved with technological solutions that cost less than staff who need to process manually - perhaps an investment in a technical solution would provide a better outcome.</p>
<p>something obviously needs to happen and this feels right.</p>
<p>Look into people's backgrounds and reasons much more before giving reductions.</p>
<p>Stop changing children for living with parents and stop bedroom tax</p>
<p>It could include people on low incomes claiming working tax credit</p>
<p>I think this is a great idea to help lower income families (I should add that I will not benefit from this scheme).</p>
<p>Given the very high Council Tax rates for people like me who is not eligible for a Reduction, it would be a requirement either to lower them for everyone, or improve and become more efficient the services in the whole city.</p>
<p>Anything that helps those in need is a good thing we are not a 3rd world country</p>
<p>I am very keen to support people in our community and in principle, it's a good idea.</p>
<p>I am concerned that this is all about saving the council admin time and money, rather than recouping income.</p>
<p>All we hear from the council is how much money they don't have - yet, they want to stop collecting money owed.</p>

<p>You can't have it both ways.</p> <p>Council tax has been increasing hugely over the last few years, yet the services and overall service has declined massively. Bins aren't collected properly, streets aren't cleaned, weeds in the pavements, parks aren't being properly maintained, graffiti all over the town centre, homeless people in tents all over the town. It looks dirty, grubby</p> <p>Why not use the surplus £100k sorting out those issues. When you've got on top of the basics and aren't increasing council tax at eye watering levels, maybe cutting back would be more palatable.</p> <p>At that point, id be happy to see the poorest being supported - the homeless in our city are amongst them - what are you doing to help them? Nothing</p> <p>Covid has been an incredibly convenient excuse for delivering second rare services for too long</p> <p>This is a rich council, help poor people please. Have some humanity.</p> <p>Council has so many responsibilities to local people in need. I am just grateful you try and do whatever is financially possible from your limited funds for those in a financial hole</p> <p>None</p> <p>I would be interested to know where the additional budget will be taken from and what the Equality Impact Assesment of such a change identifies. There is no point in making more people financially more stable through CTR if you are reducing another vital source to them somewhere else, it then becomes futile.</p> <p>I suggest you try living for a week on the net income levels you are proposing. I don't think unemployment should be a career option but you should be able to afford a basic balanced diet. Try it for a week and then tell citizens how easy it is and don't ask us.</p> <p>The earnings brackets scheme should be a higher amount like £2000.00 per month and not £250 and anybody who earns over £1500 gets a 95% reduction in council tax. That would mean that a lot of people will get a discount on their council tax bill for 2022.</p> <p>The poorer sections of society should be helped more</p> <p>Minimal discount for high end owners , second owners dwellings and vacant ones.</p> <p>I feel that the current systems and probably the proposed new system are far too complicated. This is probably exacerbated by UC not being compatible. However it makes sense to have a shake up in the current CTR scheme.</p> <p>The system is rubbish at the moment. Benefits are not properly explained. Those on low income need clarity and advice on what they are entitled to.</p> <p>we hope this will be resolved soon because the tax is very expensive that s why people default</p> <p>It is good that you are looking into a ways of supporting households in a fairer simpler to understand way.</p> <p>I have full faith in my Council to make the correct choice, I apricate the opportunity in asking for my views as a full Council Tax payer.</p> <p>Tax reductions schenes of any kind are a positive step to help families and single mothers as well as the vulnerable earners, and low income earners, all these groups need to be taken into account in the scheme.</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Please make this across the board for all people on UC regardless of home ownership. I think it would also be fair for low income families or people who has had reductions in the or income as well. Many Thanks, Natalie</p> <p>The majority of people cannot live on benefits as they stand, so any help is good. The government is looking at short term objectives, but they only storing up problems for the future as low incomes result in ill health and greater cost to nation, not mention to peoples suffering and hopelessness.</p> <p>I am in full support of any scheme that supports people in our community to live without fear of poverty! This is a small contribution to that! The council need to do more!</p>

It still does not seem low enough for very low earners with children. I know the elderly struggle too on a low pension. It just doesn't seem the right support. They need all the help they can get.
I hope it will be reduced as much as possible. With <<rent and earnings redacted>>, 175£ tax... I cannot afford it.
no
You should be transparent on the actual savings in salaries and admin costs if the changes are implemented. People could be re-deployed to focus on arrears collection.
Disgraceful Green Party policy to make benefit claimants and the lowest paid have to pay council tax.
Seems like the cost is offset by the time saved and likely to boost staff morale instead of making them penny pinch from the poor.
No
Its very helpful to lower-income households, so thank you for making these concessions.
Remove council tax
Does it go far enough to tackle poverty as a consequence of low wages and very high prices?
No it makes sense to me. Seems obvious if it saves funds for hours spent by the council figuring out all these different amounts. Then the funds can be spent where they are needed more.
I believe wholly in anything that will give autonomy and financial freedom to the maximum amount of people.
Everytime I deal with Brighton council, aside from the refuse collectors, who are incredibly hard working, I wonder what on earth all the revenue collected from council tax is spent on. Sloppy, difficult & tatty - Brighton council needs to support its permanent residents better and provide decent services rather than expecting individuals to jump through hoops to get basic amenities.
Make sure thorough checks are in place.
Make the council tax fair, according the real income of the residents.
It's a step in the right direction to review how CTR and UC can work together more efficiently. It's important for you to publicise how CTR's are currently calculated so that the public is made aware of what's currently going on.
I'm betting most people have no idea that CTR has to be recalculated every month based on an individual's earnings that month. Which of course as you mention impacts the individual's ability to properly calculate their Council Tax payments and might cause them to fall into arrears or overpay for their Council Tax
The whole process is nightmarish and unnecessary and the government need to take steps to simplify the system to better support both those on low income and local councils. With BoJo the fool in charge one doesn't hold out much hope however.
No thanks
IT appears to be necessary and fair. Everyone should pay something within their means.
Any new scheme should aim to cost as little as possible to administer, so thresholds need to be few and scoop up the most people on low incomes
In principle this sounds like a good financial idea, with not too much affect on the people that need it most. It also frees up admin costs to support other areas of the council's obligations.
Do because of my previous answers.
Be kind to people on UC!
As a lone parent working 20 hours per week and claiming universal credit, I find it frustrating that the more hours I work /the more I earn, leads to other supporting benefits being reduced, basically leaving me not much better off. I would like to 'make work pay' as is often quoted by government, but the way the system works, means I am always barely scraping by. If I earn over a certain amount, my universal credit is reduced, my help with council tax, prescriptions and dental costs are reduced, it feels pointless. I want to work my way out of poverty, but with low wages, high rents, high council tax and bills I feel very strongly as though I'm in a 'poverty trap' Im constantly struggling with finances and im sure many other 'working poor' are too. Please try and help this situation.

<p>Yes please see previous comments not that it will carry any weight to our cause or views or participation in your survey</p>
<p>Maybe after that start giving some actual schemes and bridges for people that can't work but want to be useful. Ways to eventually return to work without removing all their benefits.</p>
<p>Is there any scope for applying the proposed new scheme to those not claiming UC as well so that we had fewer schemes? Or are there anomalies that would arise?</p>
<p>As a single parent claiming UC who has just started working again, I have seen my council tax go from £60pm to £160pm in one leap because I earned £600 one month. My earnings are not consistent due to zero hour contract and yet the council tax reduction cannot reflect that. A graded system that fairly reflects the amount earned each month would be much fairer.</p>
<p>I worry that any considerations fail to consider the long term potential for individuals who, through previous lack of support or provision have fallen through the cracks, and may never evolve to an adequate earning potential. In such cases it feels important to apply a higher (or long term) minimum income. The counter-situation is that provision and support has, for many, been successfully met. These should be considered 'the norm' whilst those on abnormally higher incomes might easily return contributions to recover the deficiency.</p>
<p>Comments from those who strongly disagreed / tended to disagree with making the scheme more supportive</p>
<p>Every year council tax automatically increases by 4% and everyone who is currently paying is expected to be able to afford the increase.</p>
<p>There is a significant portion of the working class that fall into this category. What about them?</p>
<p>I don't support any measures that penalise people that work.</p>
<p>Non of the information provided explains where the council will find the additional funds? What other services will be cut or who will receive a larger annual bill?</p>
<p>The single persons allowance needs to stay as it is unfair for 1 person to pay the same as a while family</p>
<p>I don't understand. What about those on a low income who, through no fault of their own, are STILL on legacy benefits either because they haven't had a need to move over (same job for years) or moving to UTC is not beneficial financially (in my case I would be WORSE off on them). I do not get CTR on a 20 hour week, nothing, but on 16 hours a week I got it all paid. Now I pay £100 a month on council tax yet that xtra 4 hours a week for a month just covers it. I am not on UTC. Under the new scheme I would qualify, if I was on UTC. I don't get why people on legacy benefits are punished.</p>
<p>Everyone who is living in the city should pay the tax- they get lots of additional benefits and we just end up paying for them.</p>
<p>To cover the costs from existing council resources will either mean a saving in resourcing costs! Improved productivity) , which was articulated as not haopening as its already costing more. On that basis it means cuts elsewhere, or an increase to council tax. This should be funded from central government and nor relying on local workers to subsidise.</p>
<p>Why does this even need to be done. Look at the current state of the job market. Employers are begging for staff and yet you are offering more money for people to stay at home. Absolutely crazy</p>
<p>This is wrong</p>
<p>Everyone should pay the same</p>
<p>Council tax is high enough already and there should not be any further extra costs as a result of this new scheme which otherwise seems logical.</p>
<p>Focus on the services that you offer. We won't benefit from these proposals on our house. The council tax increases annually but we're not offered any more in return. Services from B&M council are appalling. Focus on offering value for money.</p>

Thank you for allowing everyone to express their opinion but instead of implementing this scheme may be think about all the other pressing problems starting with why people end up in this situation on the first place!
This is ridiculous that we are offering less services and expecting people to pay more money.
Everybody who benefits from council services should pay for them
END DISCOUNTS
single person households should not be paying the same as multi persons household. Council tax has been going up year by year and the city is looking worse and worse, where is all this money going?
As far as possible everyone should pay C Tax. Any increase in C Tax should be fully justified. The aim should be to keep the amount the same
Not keen if it costs more, where is that money coming from? Confusing survey
thank you for asking our opinion.
it should be means tested. there are too many people who get this help, and they dont really need it.
With inflation going up increasing taxes is a bad idea
I remember when council tax did not exist. Personally i feel councils/governments should collect taxes elsewhere. Or include takes in the rents and collect from the landlords. Giving them the responsibility and not the individual or council. Less paperwork for you, more work for landlords who have an easy ride. Councils would then only have to assess private owners to pay.
Reduce Council Tax for everybody especially the part which goes towards bin collections which we often do not get!
No
I hope the suggested efficiencys in administration help offset the increased costs of implementation.
Students should pay council tax, but reduced inline with thier income.
Yes it should be abolished
You will never please everybody. It feels like a decent attempt at fairness.
Comments from those who neither agreed nor disagreed with making the scheme more supportive, or who did not know, or who did not answer
Only that council tax is currently very high. Each year it has gone up. The scheme should be fair to all not just those on low incomes who are supported by the state. Simplification seems a good idea. Supporting those on low income is a good idea as long as others don't suffer as a result.
The single persons discount should be raised to at least 40 per cent. Why should a single person pay one and a half times as much as someone who lives with their partner?
If the amount of support is increased will it be covered by savings or will it increase the amount households pay to cover it. If so what would the impact be? is it neglible or significant. This is relevant to a decision that is being made but is not clear.
Yes, I think any benefit schems are encouraging some people to not work. There should be programms of benefits for single mothers without fathers support or similar when one don't have time to work because they're busy looking after another people. But there are a lot of lasy people who just don't work and get all the benefits and live better that ones who work and are not entitled to any help.
Extremely confusing
Whilst some households are in need of the CTR, others are not. We still have a long way to go before we are able to effectively target the most vulnerable. In my view, everyone should contribute to their household and to their society. Contributing to the household and society is an essential social discipline going forward which can underpin getting people back into work.
We need to help people depending on their situation, not just income.

With the current bad economic situation , any increase the taxes should at the minimum and gradual. these are difficult times for everyone

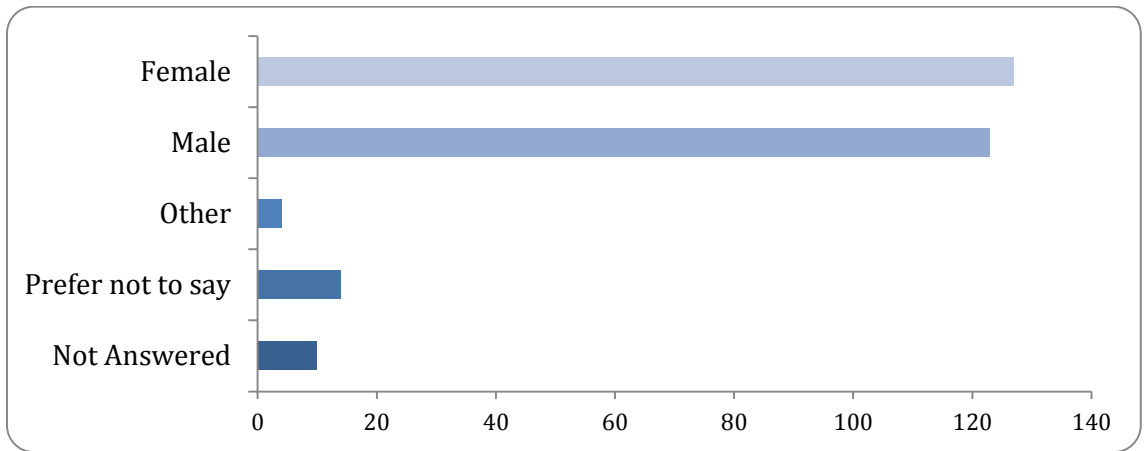
Make life easier for everybody by;

- 1) fixed threshold earning where a person starts paying council tax eg £300/wk
- 2) fixed rate for a range £300/wk-400/wk in earnings for example
- 3) fixed rate for 500/wk- 600/wk OR a fixed increase for every extra £100 increase in earnings.

Equalities breakdown

What gender are you?

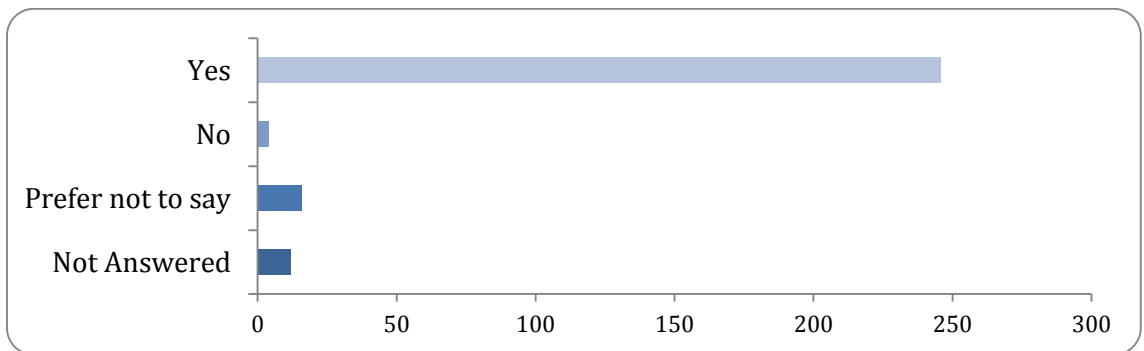
There were 268 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Female	127	45.68%
Male	123	44.24%
Other	4	1.44%
Prefer not to say	14	5.04%
Not Answered	10	3.60%

Do you identify as the sex you were assigned at birth?

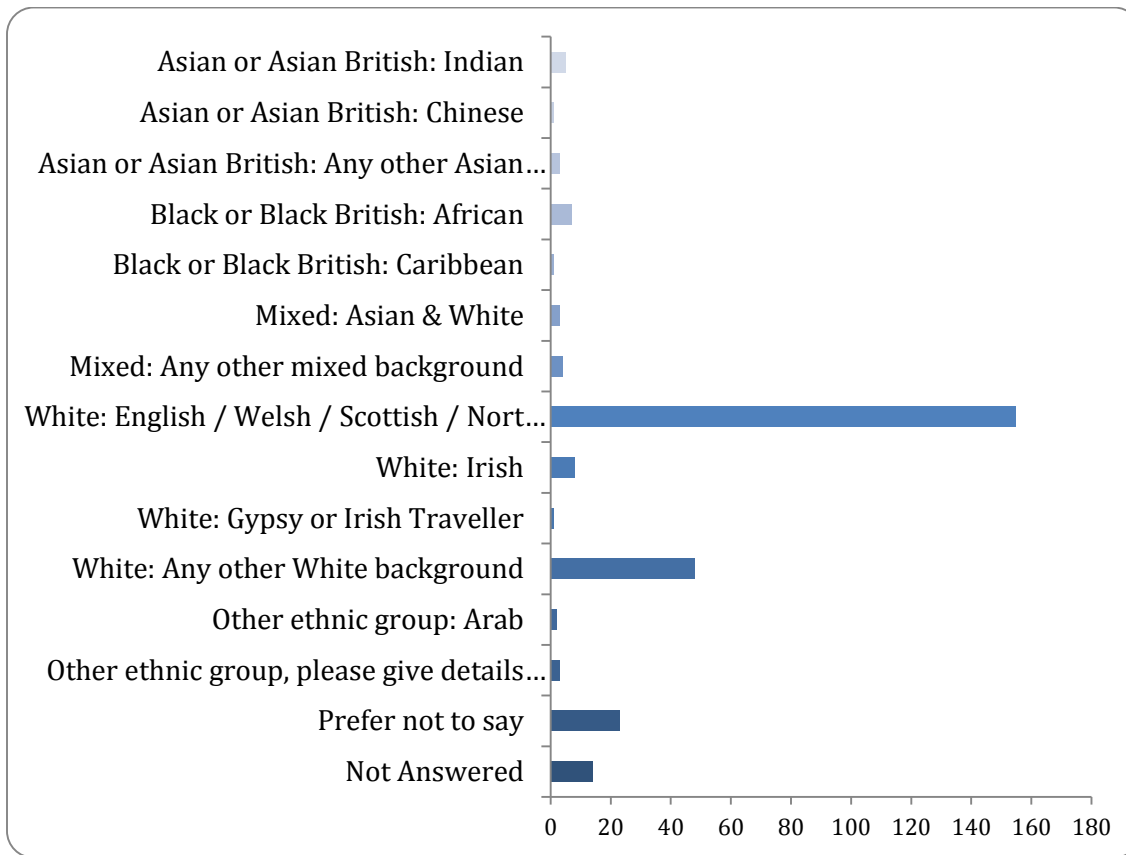
There were 266 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	246	88.49%
No	4	1.44%
Prefer not to say	16	5.76%
Not Answered	12	4.32%

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

There were 264 responses to this part of the question.

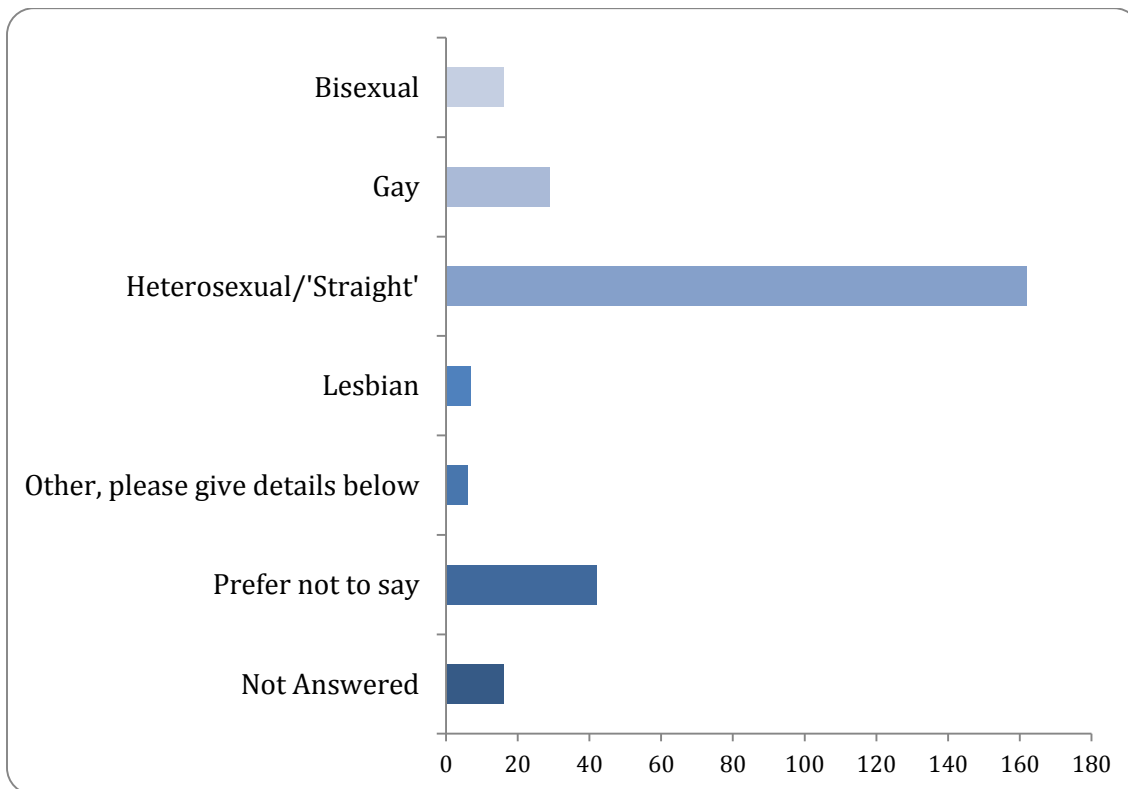


Option	Total	Percent
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	5	1.80%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	1	0.36%
Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian Background	3	1.08%
Black or Black British: African	7	2.52%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	1	0.36%
Black or Black British: Any other Black background	0	0.00%
Mixed: Asian & White	3	1.08%
Mixed: Black African & White	0	0.00%
Mixed: Black Caribbean & White	0	0.00%
Mixed: Any other mixed background	4	1.44%
White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	155	55.76%
White: Irish	8	2.88%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1	0.36%
White: Any other White background	48	17.27%

Other ethnic group: Arab	2	0.72%
Other ethnic group, please give details below	3	1.08%
Prefer not to say	23	8.27%
Not Answered	14	5.04%

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

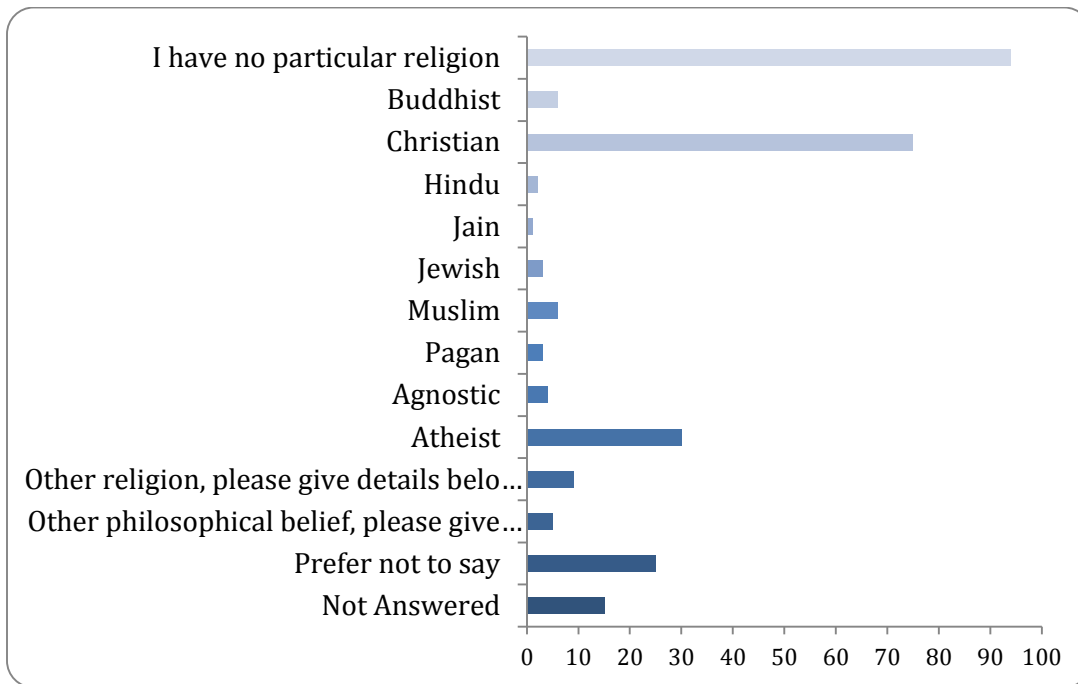
There were 262 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Bisexual	16	5.76%
Gay	29	10.43%
Heterosexual/'Straight'	162	58.27%
Lesbian	7	2.52%
Other, please give details below	6	2.16%
Prefer not to say	42	15.11%
Not Answered	16	5.76%

What is your religion or belief?

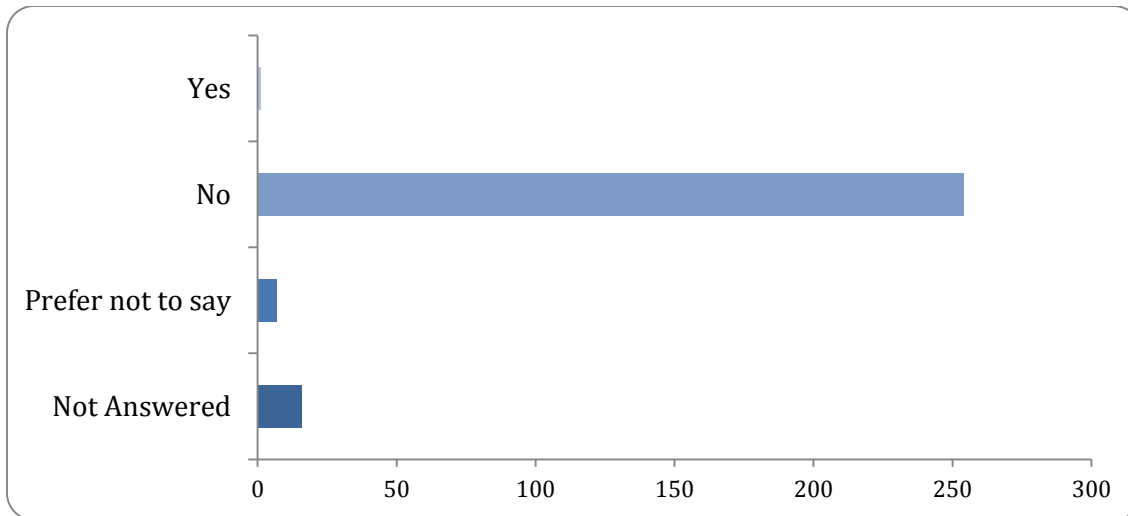
There were 263 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
I have no particular religion	94	33.81%
Buddhist	6	2.16%
Christian	75	26.98%
Hindu	2	0.72%
Jain	1	0.36%
Jewish	3	1.08%
Muslim	6	2.16%
Pagan	3	1.08%
Sikh	0	0.00%
Agnostic	4	1.44%
Atheist	30	10.79%
Other religion, please give details below	9	3.24%
Other philosophical belief, please give details below	5	1.80%
Prefer not to say	25	8.99%
Not Answered	15	5.40%

Armed forces service - Are you currently serving in the UK Armed Forces? (this includes reservists or part-time service, such as the Territorial Army)

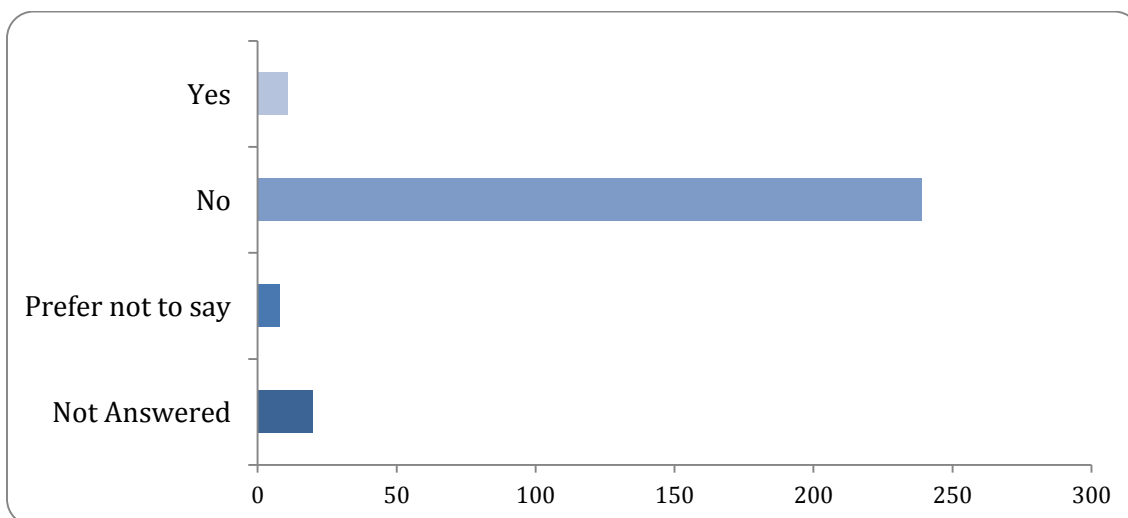
There were 262 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	1	0.36%
No	254	91.37%
Prefer not to say	7	2.52%
Not Answered	16	5.76%

Armed forces service - Have you ever served in the UK Armed Forces?

There were 258 responses to this part of the question.



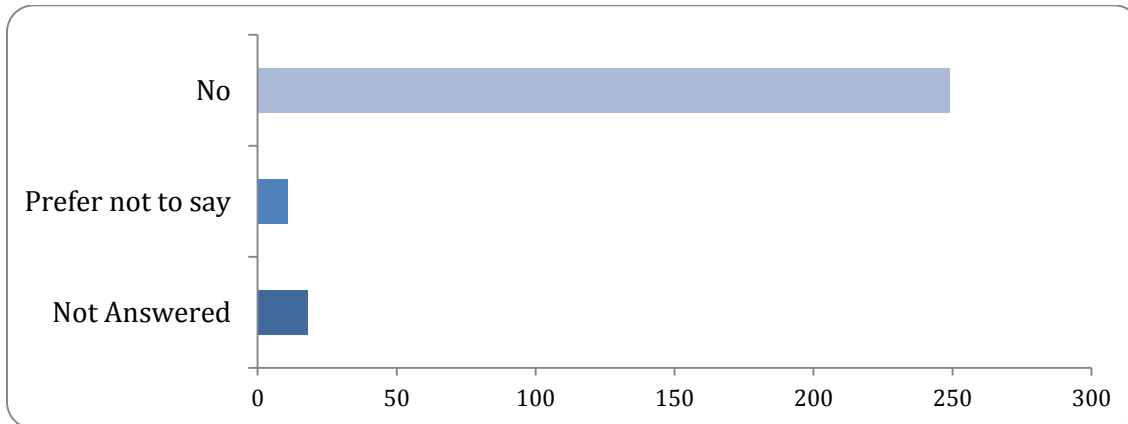
Option	Total	Percent
Yes	11	3.96%

Brighton & Hove City Council

No	239	85.97%
Prefer not to say	8	2.88%
Not Answered	20	7.19%

Armed forces service - Are you a member of a current or former serviceman or woman's immediate family/household?

There were 260 responses to this part of the question.

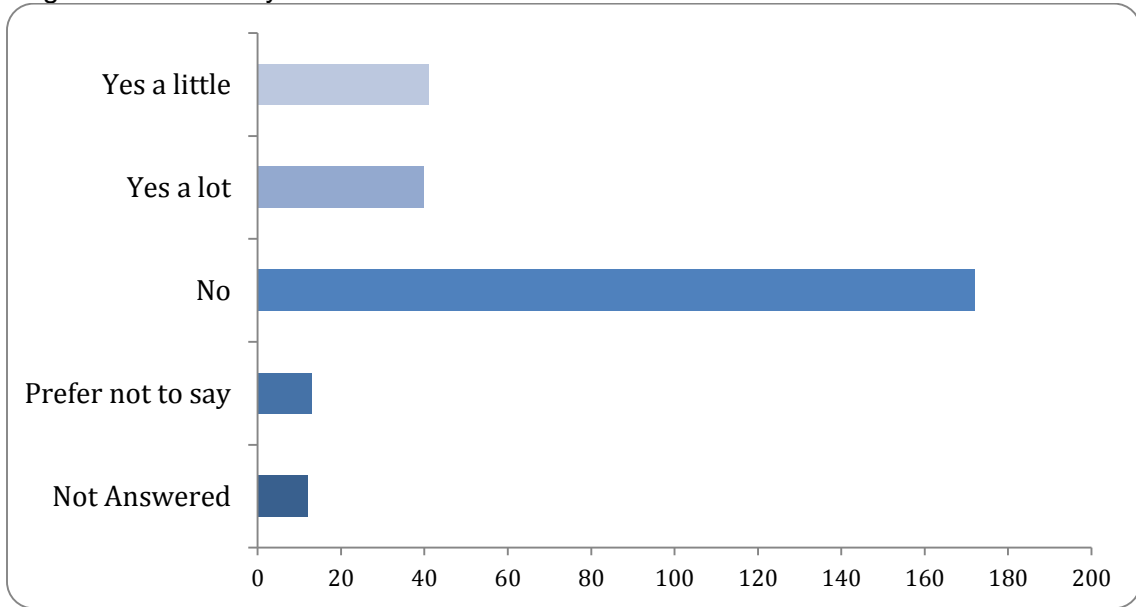


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	249	89.57%
Prefer not to say	11	3.96%
Not Answered	18	6.47%

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

There were 266 responses to this part of the question.

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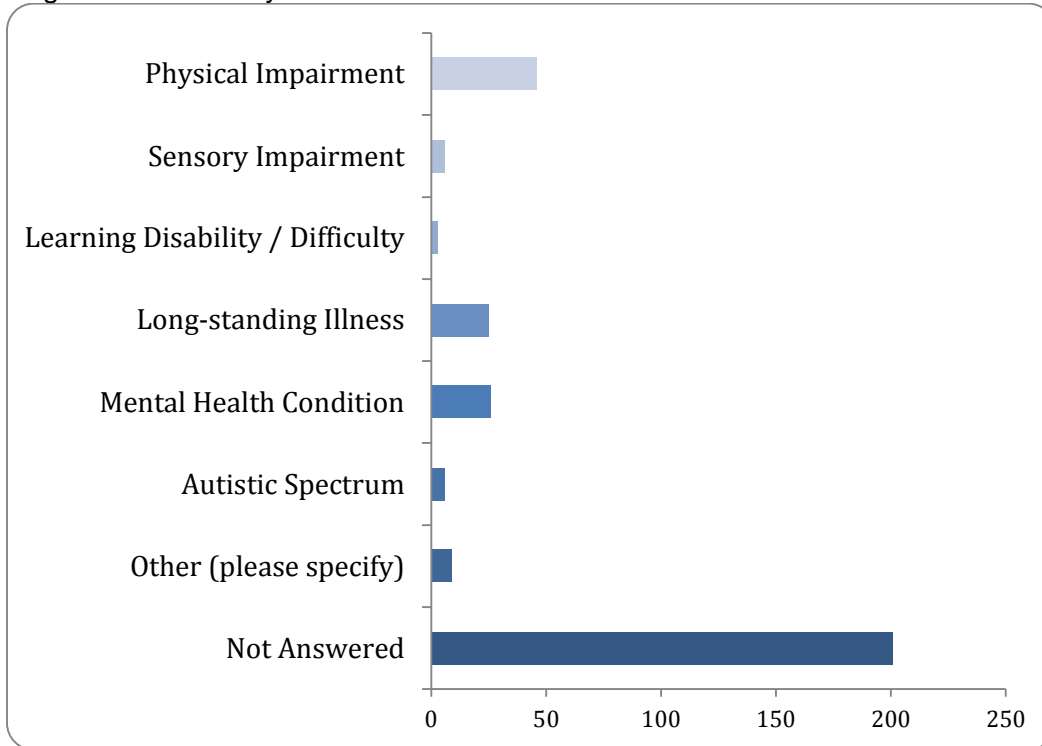
Option	Total	Percent
Yes a little	41	14.75%
Yes a lot	40	14.39%
No	172	61.87%
Prefer not to say	13	4.68%
Not Answered	12	4.32%

Please let us know the type of impairment which applies to you

Impairment type

There were 77 responses to this part of the question.

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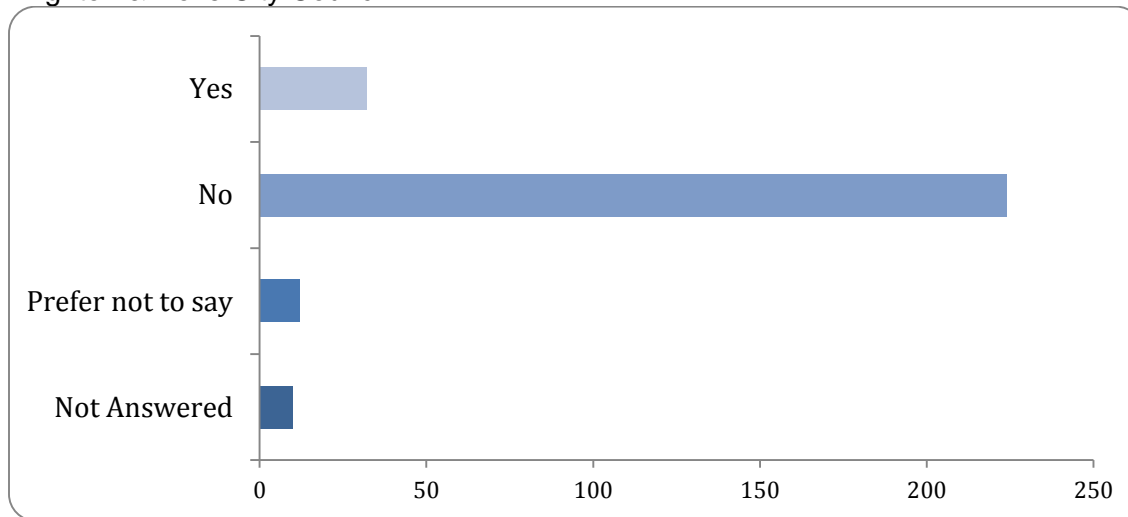


Option	Total	Percent
Physical Impairment	46	16.55%
Sensory Impairment	6	2.16%
Learning Disability / Difficulty	3	1.08%
Long-standing Illness	25	8.99%
Mental Health Condition	26	9.35%
Autistic Spectrum	6	2.16%
Developmental Condition	0	0.00%
Other (please specify)	9	3.24%
Not Answered	201	72.30%

Are you a carer?

There were 268 responses to this part of the question.

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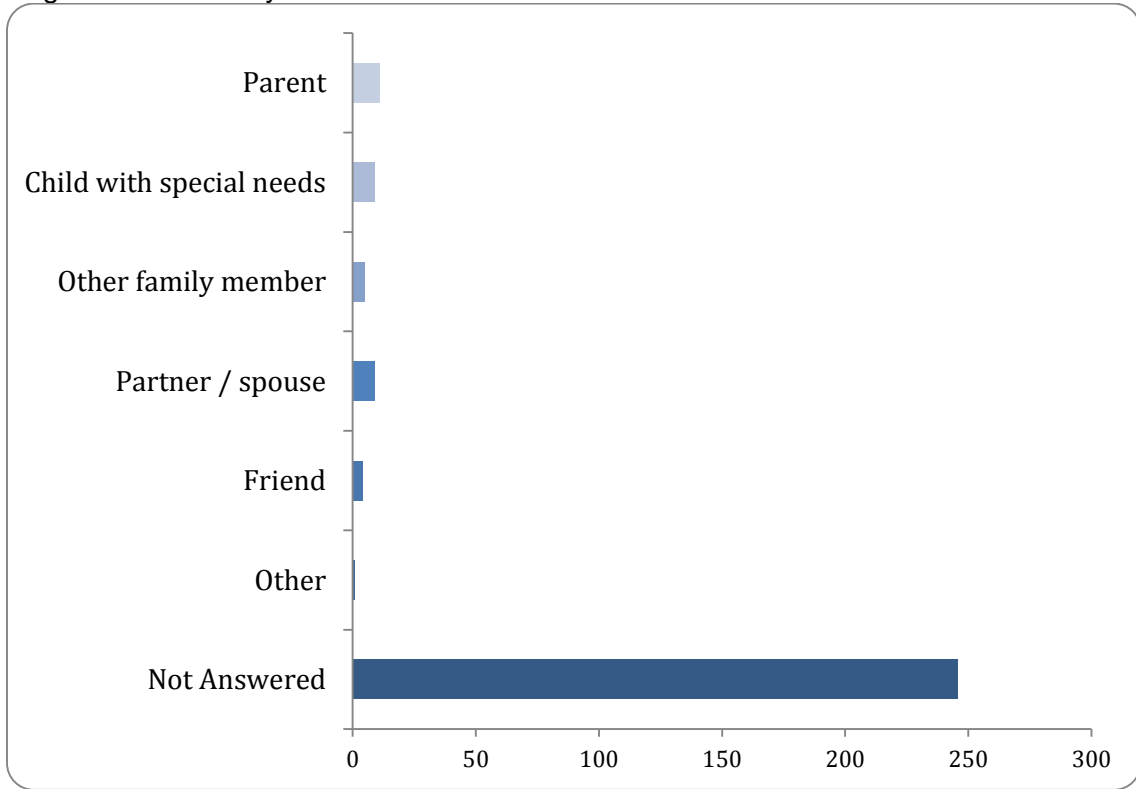


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	32	11.51%
No	224	80.58%
Prefer not to say	12	4.32%
Not Answered	10	3.60%

As a carer, who do you care for?

Care receiver

There were 32 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Parent	11	3.96%
Child with special needs	9	3.24%
Other family member	5	1.80%
Partner / spouse	9	3.24%
Friend	4	1.44%
Other	1	0.36%
Not Answered	246	88.49%

