

LCTSS consultation questionnaire: responses to Q3

Savings

91 respondents felt that savings should not be included in council tax benefit calculations. Many of these people felt that it was unfair to 'punish' those that had saved. Another 30, whilst not necessarily disagreeing with the proposal, felt that the threshold should be higher than £16,000, or altered in line with inflation. Only 28 respondents believed that savings should be included, and just four felt the threshold should be lower than £16,000.

Work incentives

51 respondents felt that the LCTSS should include some sort of incentive, encouragement or support for people to work. Only 10 explicitly disagreed with this suggestion, some feeling that finding work was a separate issue. However a further 52 people felt that incentivising work was either inappropriate or unfair, due to the fact there are not enough jobs currently available.

Fraud

38 people raised the issue of fraud, or claimants 'playing the system', and most felt strongly that the new LCTSS should do more to address this.

Who should contribute / Poll Tax

212 people felt that everyone should contribute. There were variations within this figure – some felt everyone should contribute no matter what, whilst some felt there should be exceptions for those disabled, on low incomes, etc – but they all appeared to agree with the general principle.

A further 86 respondents specified that all of those *currently in work* should contribute.

42 people stressed that council tax benefit should remain household based, which also echoes a significant feeling amongst respondents that the scheme seemed to represent a return to the Poll Tax (or Community Charge). Indeed, 70 respondents explicitly mentioned the Poll Tax, with the majority expressing concern at such a prospect, though six did feel that such a scheme would be fair.

Who should receive support

There were a number of statements that reflected similar themes, such as the 'genuinely needy', 'those who need it most' or those that 'deserve help'. The number of such statements totalled 84.

Some people (who may or may not have also featured in the 'genuinely needy' category) also specified specific groups that they felt should be targeted for support. The three major categories here were the disabled/physically unable to work (53), pensioners (34) and, more broadly, those described as having 'low incomes' (93).

Non-dependants

42 people raised the issue of non-dependants, almost exclusively referring to 'grown-up' children who lived at home, particularly those struggling to find work. The

predominant concern was that parents would have to further subsidise these children under the proposed scheme.

Students

26 respondents mention students, or at least those over the age of 18 who are still in education or training. In all of these cases, it was felt that they should remain exempt from having to pay council tax.

Single person discount

31 people believe that single person discount should remain, with some suggesting it should even offer a greater discount than is currently the case. Only three people explicitly disagree with the single person discount.

Overall support

76 respondents expressed some degree of support for the scheme. Only five explicitly disagreed with the scheme, although a far greater number disagreed with the proposals in some way, when the numbers discussed above – such as those relating to savings and concerns over a return to the Poll Tax – are also considered.