

Briefing Note

Consultation: Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme

Background

The Government is abolishing the current Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme and all Councils in England and Wales must replace this with a new 'Local Council Tax Support Scheme' (LCTS) by April 2013.

In addition to the move from a national to a local scheme the budget to fund the LCTS has been cut by at least 10%. This cut in funding means that the Council has to make some difficult decisions about who will get financial support to help pay their Council Tax bill.

The Council has developed some ideas about how it can do this best and has developed a draft LCTS. However, before the Council makes any final decisions it is asking everyone who is either interested in or likely to be affected by the new system to let us know what they think about those ideas. The Council will then consider these views when agreeing the final scheme.

Timescales

The **LCTS consultation will run between Monday 13th August and Friday 19th October 2012**. Consultation results will be reported to Cabinet on 29th November 2012. Those results and Cabinet's recommendations for a new LCTS will be considered by a full meeting of Council on 23rd January 2013. This meeting will make the final decisions about the new LCTS for Stockton-on-Tees.

Get Involved in the Consultation

Everyone who is either interested in or likely to be affected by the new LCTS is being invited to let us know what they think about the draft LCTS that the Council has put together. To participate in the consultation, please:



Read the information about the draft LCTS and **complete the short online questionnaire** at: <http://www.stockton.gov.uk/welfarereform>



Read the information about the draft LCTS which is being delivered to households across the Borough and **complete the short paper questionnaire** in that booklet.



Attend one of the LCTS Consultation Drop In Sessions listed below:

DATE & TIME	VENUE
Monday 3 rd September (11:00 – 13:00)	Yarm Youth and Community Centre High Church Wynd Yarm TS15 9BQ
Wednesday 12 th September (11:00 – 13:00)	New Life Family Centre Low Grange Avenue Billingham Stockton-on-Tees TS23 3EQ
Wednesday 19 th September (16:00 – 18:00)	Stockton Central Library Church Road Stockton-on-Tees Cleveland TS18 1TU
Wednesday 26 th September (11:00 – 13:00)	Thornaby Pavillion Wrightson House Thornaby Stockton-on-Tees TS17 9EW
Monday 1 st October (16:00 – 18:00)	Beckfields Community Centre Beckfields Avenue Ingleby Barwick Stockton-on-tees TS17 0QA



If you have any queries about the consultation or would like a paper copy of the questionnaire, please **telephone the Benefits Helpline on Tel. 01642 393829**



If you have any queries about the consultation or would like a paper copy of the questionnaire, please **email:** benefits.section@stockton.gov.uk

Please note the **closing date for the consultation is Friday 19th October 2012.**