

## Results from the 2015-2016 Draft LCTRS Consultation Survey

### Summary of results received:

Despite our proactive approach to encouraging participation, the response rate has been very poor with only 80 surveys being completed.

Shown below is a summary of the results received for each question asked in the survey

### Section 1: Key Principles & Features

#### 1.1 Customers were asked to rank the following principles between 1 to 5: 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

There should be no funding cuts in other council services:

1	2	3	4	5
36.70%	13.90%	15.20%	8.90%	25.30%

Council Tax should be charged on empty properties:

1	2	3	4	5
17.50%	20.00%	18.80%	10.00%	33.80%

Council Tax reduction should not be paid to those with relatively large capital or savings:

1	2	3	4	5
20.00%	25.00%	16.30%	21.30%	17.50%

Better off claimants should pay relatively more, so the least well off are protected:

1	2	3	4	5
13.80%	11.30%	23.80%	20.00%	31.30%

People should be better off in work:

1	2	3	4	5
45.60%	13.90%	13.90%	15.20%	11.40%

## 1.2 Residents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the following proposals are reasonable?

Keep the savings cut off limit at £6K:

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
28.90%	22.40%	18.40%	14.50%	15.80%	21%

Keep the minimum weekly Council Tax reduction amount of £1:

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
19.20%	28.80%	31.50%	11.00%	9.60%	27.4%

Continue to restrict maximum support to Band C Council Tax level for people in Band D properties and above:

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
24.70%	36.40%	22.10%	3.90%	13.00%	44%

Decrease the taper used to calculate Council Tax support from 25% to 20%

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
18.40%	27.60%	15.80%	14.50%	23.70%	7.8%

Everyone has to pay 10% of their Council Tax

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
38.80%	18.80%	11.30%	7.50%	23.80%	26.3%

Ignore the first £25 per week of earnings when calculating Council Tax support

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
28.40%	23.00%	20.30%	17.60%	10.80%	23%

Have one set charge for non-dependants who work (between £10 & £12 per week)

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
19.70%	31.60%	10.50%	14.50%	23.70%	13.1%

Have one set charge for non-dependants who do not work (between £5 & £6 per week)

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Net Agreement
19.00%	27.80%	17.70%	11.40%	24.10%	11.3%

**1.3 Residents were asked if they thought there were any groups of people in the community who would be affected more than others by the changes proposed to Sandwell’s Council Tax Support Scheme.**

Yes	No	Don't Know
50.6%	16%	33.3%

**Residents who answered ‘yes’ were asked which groups and why? The following summarises the comments received:**

- Elderly and disabled as they are already struggling
- People who work part time or are on low income
- Those who are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance/Income Support/Employment Support Allowance as they are already on minimal incomes.

**1.4 Residents were advised that a few groups may be positively affected by these changes and were asked to tell us whether they think these proposed Council Tax Reduction changes would have a high, medium or low impact on each of those groups?**

	High	Medium	Low	Don't know
Families with children	26.30%	27.60%	22.40%	23.70%
Lone parents	31.20%	24.70%	22.10%	22.10%
Carers	29.70%	31.10%	13.50%	25.70%
Part-time and full-time workers	31.60%	19.70%	27.60%	21.10%
People who are disabled	29.90%	24.70%	22.10%	23.40%
Single people and couples without children	26.00%	24.70%	28.60%	20.80%

**1.5 Residents were asked why they thought the groups they identified as high may be affected more than other groups? The following summarises the comments received:**

- Lone parents may have less money and have children to provide for
- Families with children will suffer due to less income
- Full time carers and disabled have no access to extra income.

**1.6 Residents were advised that a few groups may be negatively affected by these changes and were asked to tell us whether they think these proposed Council Tax Benefit changes would have a high, medium or low impact on each of those groups?**

	High	Medium	Low	Don't know
Families with children	29.70%	28.40%	18.90%	23.00%
Lone parents	37.30%	17.30%	22.70%	22.70%
Carers	32.00%	20.00%	21.30%	26.70%
People who are disabled	39.20%	14.90%	18.90%	27.00%
Single people and couples without children	26.70%	18.70%	33.30%	21.30%

**1.7 Residents were then asked why they think the groups they had identified as high may be affected more than other groups? The following summarises the comments received:**

- Disabled are facing enough cuts in their benefits and have higher living costs.
- Lone parents don't always receive the support they should and children suffer.
- Those unable to work have no means of increasing their income.

**1.8 Residents were asked if they thought any of the following groups of residents should be protected from the changes proposed in Sandwell’s Council Tax Reduction Scheme.**

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Net Agreement
Families with children	42.30%	48.70%	9.00%	-6.4%
Lone parents	53.20%	40.50%	6.30%	12.7%
Carers	56.40%	38.50%	5.10%	17.9%
Part-time and full-time workers	44.70%	47.40%	7.90%	-2.7%
People who are disabled	58.20%	36.70%	5.10%	21.5%
Single people	32.50%	58.40%	9.10%	-25.9%
Couples with children	21.30%	69.30%	9.30%	-48%

**1.9 Residents were asked to provide any other comments they wished to make about the proposals. The following summarises the comments received:**

- Everyone should pay something.
- Consideration should be given to vulnerable groups.
- Make more rigorous checks on people who try to claim Council Tax discount.
- The scheme should reflect the Governments requirements ‘work must pay’

**1.10 Residents were asked if they had any alternative suggestions for the scheme. The following summarises the comments received:**

- Everyone should contribute.
- Consider making the cuts elsewhere within the Council.
- The Council has to save money and be more efficient.