

To:

Members of Scrutiny Committee

(Councillors P H Murphy (Chairman), N Thwaites (Vice Chairman), I Aldridge, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, P Pilkington and R Woods)

Members of Cabinet

(Councillor A Trollope-Bellew (Leader), M Chilcott (Deputy Leader), M Dewdney, A Hadley, C Morgan, S J Pugsley, K H Turner, D J Westcott)

Our Ref SC/DS

Contact Marcus Prouse mprouse@westsomerset.gov.uk

Date 17 October 2017

**THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE MEETING
THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, TAPE FORMAT
OR IN OTHER LANGUAGES ON REQUEST**

Dear Councillor

I hereby give you notice to attend the following meeting:

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 26 October 2017

Time: 3.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton

Please note that this meeting may be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy.

Therefore unless you advise otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 01643 703704.

Yours sincerely



BRUCE LANG
Proper Officer

RISK SCORING MATRIX

Report writers score risks in reports uses the scoring matrix below

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact							

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

- Mitigating actions for high ('High' or above) scoring risks are to be reflected in Service Plans, managed by the Group Manager and implemented by Service Lead Officers;
- Lower scoring risks will either be accepted with no mitigating actions or included in work plans with appropriate mitigating actions that are managed by Service Lead Officers.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on Thursday 26 October 2017 at 3.30 pm

Council Chamber, Williton

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 3 August 2017, to be approved and signed as a correct record – **SEE ATTACHED.**

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and record any declarations of interest in respect of any matters included on the Agenda for consideration at this Meeting.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public wishing to speak at this meeting there are a few points you might like to note.

A three-minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue. There will be no further opportunity for comment at a later stage. Your comments should be addressed to the Chairman and any ruling made by the Chair is not open to discussion. If a response is needed it will be given either orally at the meeting or a written reply made within five working days of the meeting.

5. Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

To review the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the Cabinet Meeting held on 6 September 2017 – **SEE ATTACHED.**

6. Cabinet Forward Plan

To review the latest Cabinet Forward Plan for the months of November onwards, published on 28 September 2017 – **SEE ATTACHED.**

7. Chairman's Announcements

An opportunity to update the Committee on any matters of interest or matters arising.

8. Health and Wellbeing in West Somerset

To consider a verbal update to be presented by John Dyer, Head of Operations and Chris Turner, Operational Manager from South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust – **DETAILS ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to update Members on the current situation within West Somerset. Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group have also been invited to attend and speak on this item.

9. Role of Planning Enforcement in West Somerset

To consider Report No. WSC 115/17 to be presented by Councillor Dewdney – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to set out the legislative background for Planning Enforcement and how it is applied across the West Somerset Planning Area.

10. Review of the Council Tax Rebate Scheme for 2018-2019

To consider Report No. WSC 116/17 to be presented by Councillor Chilcott – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to provide information on the Council Tax Rebate scheme as well as setting the background and context for reviewing the scheme for working age applicants from 2018-2019.

11. Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

To receive items and review the Scrutiny Committee Work plan for 2017-2018. - **SEE ATTACHED.**

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED TO CHECK THEIR POST TRAYS

The Council's Vision:

To enable people to live, work and prosper in West Somerset

The Council's Corporate Priorities:

- Local Democracy:
Securing local democracy and accountability in West Somerset, based in West Somerset, elected by the people of West Somerset and responsible to the people of West Somerset.
- New Nuclear Development at Hinkley Point
Maximising opportunities for West Somerset communities and businesses to benefit from the development whilst protecting local communities and the environment.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 August 2017 at 3.30 pm

Present:

Councillor P H MurphyChairman
Councillor N ThwaitesVice-Chairman

Councillor I Aldridge
Councillor R Clifford
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor J Parbrook
Councillor P Pilkington
Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor R Woods

Members in Attendance:

Councillor M Chilcott
Councillor A Hadley
Councillor M Dewdney
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Director - Property and Development (T May)
Principal Revenues and Debt Recovery Officer (D Emery)
Revenues Officer (W Walsh)
Assistant Director - Operational Delivery (C Hall)
Assistant Director - Energy Infrastructure (A Goodchild)
Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny (M Prouse)
Democratic Services Officer (C Rendell)

Others:

Chief Operating Officer for the Somerset Partnership NHS Trust (A Heron)

SC 11 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

SC 12 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 15 June 2017 – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 15 June 2017, be confirmed as a correct record.

SC 13 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Murphy	All items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All items	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	All items	Crowcombe	Personal	Spoke
Cllr M Chilcott	All items	SCC	Personal	Spoke

Councillor Aldridge further declared a personal interest as an Elected Governor on the Health Trust Board.

SC 14 Cabinet Key Decisions and Actions

(Copy of the Cabinet Key Decisions from the meeting held on 21 July 2017, circulated at the meeting)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Key Decisions from the meeting held on 21 July 2017, be noted.

SC 15 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 13 July 2017, circulated at the meeting)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 13 July 2017, be noted.

SC 16 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised the Members of the Committee that there would be a Special Scrutiny meeting on 23 November 2017 to discuss three reports. These were:-

- 2018-2019 Draft Fees and Charges.
- 2018-2019 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Update; and
- Review of the Earmarked Reserves.

SC 17 Health and Wellbeing in West Somerset

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the Somerset Partnership NHS Trust (SPNHST), Andy Heron, attended the meeting.

Members of the Committee had decided that they would prefer a question and answer session rather than a formal report from the SPNHST.

The purpose of the discussion was to update Members on the current situation relating to the NHS within West Somerset.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- When the COO had previously reported to the Committee, six stroke beds had been temporarily closed. Members queried what was the occupancy rate for the remaining six beds?
The occupancy rate was close to 100%. The decision to close the six beds was made by the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG) who had decided to support the new Community Stroke Service because they believed that the hospitals could manage with fewer beds. Stroke Units across the County had operated under pressure and there were not enough stroke beds to meet the present and future demands. There were patients that had to wait in hospital to move to a stroke bed and over the past two months there had been between four and fifteen patients that had been waiting at any one time. The SCCG did not have the money to fund the services. The COO had asked the question 'was there the right mix of standard beds and stroke beds?' and believed the answer was no. He stated that this needed to be reviewed due to the poor community based services.
- What statistics were available as to how many residents within the Williton Hospital catchment area, had been sent to South Petherton Hospital due to the bed shortage in Williton?
The COO would come back to the Committee with the figures.
- The Early Supported Discharge Service had been rolled out within West Somerset and had supported 30-40% of stroke patients. Was there still a good compliment of this service within the area?
The Service had met all of its targets set for growth and was well thought of by officers, carers and patients. Members had previously queried whether West Somerset was treated the same as other areas due to the rurality, which was confirmed. . The team used a system that showed active cases, which officers were working on those cases and specific treatment regimes. Equal service was delivered across the County. The COO would come back to the Committee with more accurate figures.
- Members were pleased to find out that 10 more beds had been opened in Minehead Hospital and queried what the longer term position for the Hospital was and how it could be made more viable in the future? The addition of a dialysis unit would help benefit the hospital in the future.
The COO was pleased that the Acute Care Unit had been reopened and apologised that the SPNHST had been unable to reopen it sooner, this had been due to delays in the recruitment process. The COO had held a board meeting at Minehead Hospital and officers were impressed by the building and its importance within the town and planned to increase the bed numbers located there. There were no question marks against Minehead Hospital's future.
- Members queried why consultants had not utilised the opportunity to work in Minehead Hospital to alleviate the pressure on patients who had to travel to Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton.
The COO was commissioning a piece of work with the two boards to create a joint management team for the two organisations so they could deliver more joined up services in the local area. He was aware that the theatre space in Minehead Hospital was underused and was investigating the potential to have anaesthetics provided to enable

surgery to take place. The theatre space at Musgrove Park Hospital was under pressure so it made sense to utilise other space that was available.

- Members requested clarification on the roles of the SCCG and the SPNHST.
The SCCG was responsible for what services were delivered and the allocation of funding. The SPNHST was responsible for how services were delivered. It was not easy to distinguish because some of the contract terms were fixed.
- What was the catchment area for Williton Hospital? Members were concerned about the distance and difficulty for some of the patients' visitors and the lack of a direct bus route from Williton to South Petherton which was the nearest hospital used when Williton Hospital was full.
The areas were not geographically linked. There were options to either add more beds in South Petherton or replace the beds that were removed from Williton. Both the SCCG and the SPNHST would need to discuss the options to help provide equal access to all patients.
- The Members had attended a Board Meeting on the other side of the County and were amazed where additional bed spaces had been found. Minehead and Williton Hospitals were not mentioned and other Board Members thought that due to Butlins being closed in the winter, additional beds and services were not required.
- Concern was raised that theatre space was not being used and patients had to travel to Taunton for treatment instead.
Location and the risks associated had not been discussed.
- West Somerset had the highest percentage of over 65's in the country, how did this affect the demand on the NHS?
It did have an impact on the NHS especially when people reached the later years of their life. In reality, the local hospitals needed more beds.
- Members agreed that rurality was an issue for the NHS as well as West Somerset Council. Equal access for all was a practicality that needed to be addressed. Members gave the COO several examples of issues with access and requested that consultants should be able to travel around the County to visit patients in their local surgeries and hospitals. However, they were very pleased to see wards had been reopened in Minehead Hospital.
The COO was not sure what could be done to promote consultants to use local surgeries. There was a possibility to use telephone-conferencing in the future but understood this was not practical for all.
- Concern was raised that it was not just West Somerset residents that used Williton Hospital and that a large number of Sedgemoor residents travelled to Williton rather than travel to the other side of Bridgwater.
- Members praised Williton Hospital and the staff that worked there.
- The Chairman thanked the COO for his attendance and the positive feedback he had given on beds being reopened in the local hospitals.

SC 18 West Somerset Council Asset Strategy 2017-2020

The report WSC 88/17 was presented by Councillor M Chilcott.

The purpose of the report was whether to support a recommendation to Council

to adopt the West Somerset Council 2017-2020 Asset Strategy and Action Plan.

The Asset Strategy and Asset List Action Plan was presented to Corporate PAG on 29 March 2017 and a majority of the Members agreed with the approach, however, there were some concerns with the proposed governance arrangements.

A proposal was discussed to amend the governance of asset specific decisions from an absolute officer decision to a Portfolio Holder decision which had the option of a Scrutiny 'Call In' procedure being invoked.

Officers and Portfolio Holders were concerned that this might delay asset portfolio decisions, which the strategy had addressed by streamlining the decision making process.

The Portfolio Holder and Officers would review any impact to the delivery of the Asset Strategy if it was deemed that the use of Scrutiny 'Call In' negated the delivery of the strategy. If this was found to be the case, then a change to the process would be subject to a new Council decision.

Ward Councillors would be consulted when assets in their Ward were being appraised and given an opportunity to discuss any concerns with the Asset Management Team. However, if their support on the outcome for the asset could not be mutually agreed, then they could seek to invoke the Scrutiny 'Call In' procedure.

Once the strategy was approved, officers and the Portfolio Holder would not need to go back through the full committee cycle on each occasion because authority would have already been given. However, under the 'Constitution' decisions were subject to a 'Call In' if at least five non-executive Councillors made a proper request within a period of five days from the decision being published.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- The Chairman thanked Members of the Committee for their hard work and their input on the language and protocols used within the Strategy.
- Concerns were raised around the language used and the protocols within the strategy. The main concern was with the governance and the threat to democratic procedures and the Council's decision making process.
- Another concern was raised on what involvement Ward Councillors would have in the decision making process with the worry that they would not be involved until after the decision had been made.
This had been discussed at length and officers wanted to have options appraisals completed first so that they could give Ward Councillors all the information when they were consulted. This would be prior to any final decisions being made. There would be lots of phases within the process which would give Ward Councillors an opportunity to submit their feedback.

- Members suggested the rewording of paragraph 6.2 of the report, to read 'Ward Councillors would be consulted when assets in the Ward had been appraised'.
- Members requested confirmation on the process. This was a governance process which the Members needed to have confidence in. *A flow diagram was presented at Corporate PAG and officers would produce another one to clarify the process at Council.*
- Concern was raised that the Asset Strategy was in danger of being based on purely fiscal considerations. *This was not true, a non-commercial scoring system had been included.*
- Members requested that the dates were removed from the front of the Asset Strategy and there were some assets listed in the appendices that needed removing. *There were a few amendments that needed to be made and would be implemented when the report was taken to Council.*

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee recommended:-

- 1) The adoption of the West Somerset Council Asset Strategy, the principles within and the recommendations, subject to the incorporation of the amendments requested by the Committee;
- 2) That the detailed asset specific final protocol decisions that flowed from the approved Strategy be undertaken as Cabinet Portfolio Holder decisions.

SC 19 Business Rates Revaluation Relief

The report WSC 89/17 was presented by Councillor M Chilcott.

The purpose of the report was to recommend to Cabinet the amendment of the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy to include a new relief for revaluation from 1 April 2017.

A range of Mandatory and Discretionary Rate Reliefs reduced the amount of Non Domestic Rates (NDR) a business or organisation had to pay. The rules and levels that meant a business qualified for Mandatory Reliefs were set by Government and were the same throughout the country. The rules and levels awarded for Discretionary Rate Reliefs were set by each Council and could vary from Council to Council.

A Business Rates Revaluation normally took place every five years. A revaluation was originally due to have taken effect from 1 April 2015 but the Government had delayed it by two years. Therefore the new ratings came into effect on 1 April 2017.

Each rating list had a Transitional Relief Scheme which was designed to phase in both the increased and decreased amounts of Business Rates payable that followed a revaluation. The phasing could last for between one and five years.

However, Transitional Relief did not provide support for changes in Business Rate Reliefs. Despite the increase in the threshold for eligibility to Small Business Rate Relief, some ratepayers would no longer be eligible to receive it

due to an increase in their rateable value. This could also apply to recipients of Rural Rate Relief.

The Government had announced the establishment of a £300,000,000 discretionary fund over four years from 2017-2018 to support those that faced the steepest increases in their Business Rates bills due to the 2017 revaluation. The intention was that every billing authority in England would be provided with a share of the fund to support their local businesses. Billing authorities would be expected to use their share of the funding to develop their own Discretionary Relief Schemes.

The Department of Communities and Local Government had published a consultation on a design of the Discretionary Relief on 9 March 2017 which sought the views on the allocation of the fund, arrangements for compensation for local authorities and the operation of local schemes. West Somerset Council's proposed share of the £300,000,000 was as follows:-

- 2017-2018 - £148,000 estimated relief £97,664 and reserves of £50,336.
- 2018-2019 - £72,000.
- 2019-2020 - £30,000.
- 2020-2021 - £4,000.

The Discretionary Revaluation Relief Policy included the following criteria:-

- Relief would only be granted where the rateable value was less than £200,000 and the gross rates increase was greater than 5%.
- Reductions would be to further increase the Transitional Relief that phased in the increased charge. Each year would be less and less over the four years.
- The scheme was designed to assist ratepayers who had seen a significant increase in their bills due to the revaluation.
- Relief would only be granted for premises which were occupied.
- Relief would not be awarded when Mandatory Relief had been granted.
- Taxpayers would be invited to apply.
- All relief awarded was subject to state aid €200,000 (de-minimis)
- Relief would be targeted to local businesses, not national or multi-national in nature. Local businesses were those that had premises wholly in the Council's area.

The Council would consider every application for Discretionary Revaluation Relief on its merits.

There was no statutory right of appeal against any award of Discretionary Revaluation Relief, although with any decision by a public authority, this could be challenged by Judicial Review. The authority would, upon request, review decisions made.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members queried who had made the decision to add a local criteria on paragraph 5.4 of the report.

This was a choice made by West Somerset Council and not by Central Government.

- Members queried the Fair Funding Review which was mentioned in the report and what this might deliver and what impact this would have on the Council.

There was no effect on the Council as a billing authority because the Council would get the money back via a Government Grant. The effect on the local businesses was a reduced impact on their bills due to the revaluation and to help alleviate pressure created by the increased rateable values and bills.

The decision to award the relief would be based on the local criteria used in the policy and each premises would be tested by their local authority.

- Did the Council check if businesses could afford to pay full rates prior to the relief being awarded?

Not with this policy. There were checks made with other reliefs that were offered by the Council and income and expenditure calculations were taken into consideration. This policy looked at the local businesses that had been hit the hardest by the revaluation.

- Concern was raised that the rateable value could be affected by many different factors which could change the rateable value at any time. Was this factored in the calculations?

Changes to rateable values happened all the time and the Government had not accounted for this. However, the Revenues Officer had put some money aside for any unknown factors and appeals.

- Members welcomed the relief for businesses that had struggled to pay increased bills. They thanked the Revenues Team for their work on the policy.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee supported the use of Council's local discount powers from 1 April 2017, to award Revaluation Relief to those organisations that faced significant increases in their Business Rates bills following revaluation.

SC 20 Public Conveniences Transfer Update

The report WSC 90/17 was presented by Councillors M Chilcott and M Dewdney.

The purpose of the report was to further update the Scrutiny Committee on the public convenience transfers, as requested by Members.

The following points were the key updates:-

- The Minehead facilities were open under a management agreement.
- Minehead Warren Road conveniences had been reopened. Minehead Town Council had requested that they should operate the facilities.
- Porlock Central Toilets had now closed. This was planned due to the preference to retain the Doverhay facilities.
- The Blue Anchor facilities had been operated by a Community Group under a lease so that a trial run could be undertaken before a freehold

arrangement was entered into. This had been a success and the freehold transfer had been completed on 30 May 2017.

- The Wheddon Cross Public Convenience transfer was not yet completed and remained in the hands of solicitors.
- Williton Parish Council had not made a decision on the transfer of the toilets at Killick Way, West Somerset Council continued to provide information when requested.
- The National Trust had taken ownership of the toilets at Selworthy.
- The Asset Management Group confirmed that the facilities at Market Street, Watchet, Carousel, Minehead and Central Car Park, Porlock would be marketed with the support of Lambert Smith Hampton.

If the facilities could not be put to an alternative use and funded by others within the timeframe, West Somerset Council would incur additional Business Rates for the Carousel, Porlock Central and Market Street, Watchet facilities.

The full saving of £107,000 had been taken from the budget from April 2017, any overspends were currently estimated at £1,300 and would need to be managed throughout the year.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members requested clarification on the situation with n the toilets at Selworthy.
The view was taken that the National Trust had taken ownership of the facilities because they currently had occupation of the facilities and had started refurbishment works. The Council's Solicitors had written to the National Trust to advise them that its actions had confirmed the termination of the lease.
- Concern was raised on the current situation with the toilets located on Killick Way, Williton and the Parish Council's decision.
Officers had been involved in communication with the Parish Council and had discussed the possibility of a three year lease along with the freehold. The Parish Council did not have a decision making meeting scheduled, so this was still unresolved.
- Members queried t how the Carousel, Porlock Central and Market Street, Watchet facilities would be marketed? Would they be let or sold?
The intention was that the facilities would be leased.
- Concern was raised on the difficulty to let the toilets located at the Carousel in Minehead due to the extent of the damage to the facilities.
Officers were in negotiations with the leaseholder in the top part of the building to get the repairs carried out.
- Members hoped that all Parish and Town Councils would be afforded the same opportunities to take control of the toilets located in their areas if they decided at a later date they wished to do so.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

SC 21 Hinkley Point C Annual Statement to EDF Energy (For Information)

The report WSC 91/17 was presented by Councillors Morgan, Chilcott, Hadley, Turner and Westcott.

The purpose of the report was to summarise and bring to the attention of Members the content of the Annual Statement which related to the Hinkley Point C Project that had been sent to EDF Energy. The Annual Statement was a joint statement between West Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Somerset County Council.

There were two Section 106 Agreements between EDF Energy and West Somerset Council in relation to the Hinkley Point C Project. The first related to the Site Preparation Works (SPW) planning permission which West Somerset Council granted in January 2012 and the second to the main Development Consent Order (DCO) which was granted by the Secretary of State in March 2013.

Both agreements included a series of payments made to West Somerset Council for staff to work in specific areas and contributions for the Council to administer and spend in specific areas in accordance with specific criteria. Both agreements required the Council to provide an Annual Statement to EDF Energy which detailed the previous year's activity.

To bring some of the key areas of activity 'to life', the following additional information was included:-

- Housing and Accommodation.
- Economic Development, Tourism and Skills and Training.
- Economic Development.
- Skills and Training; and
- CIM Fund.

During discussion, the following point was raised:-

- Members queried the information given in the section on Housing and Accommodation Contributions and how the subsidies worked on the Doniford Road development which helped create new bed spaces. *The Doniford Road development was one of the Housing Enabling Schemes where the Developer had worked with the Affordable Housing Provider and presented a case to get their shortfall covered by the Hinkley fund which enabled them to fulfil the affordable housing plots within the developments.*

RESOLVED that the content of the Annual Statement be noted.

SC 22 Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

The Chairman highlighted the following items which would be brought to Committee:-

- The Ambulance Service had been invited to the October meeting.
- West Somerset Opportunities Area. The Chairman had requested that this item should be considered at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the content of the Work Plan was noted.

The meeting closed at 5.57pm.

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 6 September 2017

NOTES OF KEY DECISIONS

Note: The details given below are for information and internal use only and are not the formal record of the meeting

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	CONTACT LEAD OFFICER
Forward Plan (Agenda Item 5)	Agreed that the Forward Plan for the month of November 2017 be approved.	Assistant Chief Executive
WSC Representation on Minehead Business Improvement District Steering Group (Agenda Item 6)	Agreed that the Regeneration and Economic Growth Lead Member be appointed as the Council's representative on the Steering Group for Minehead Business Improvement District.	Assistant Chief Executive
Proposed Business Rates Revaluation Relief Scheme (Agenda Item 7)	Agreed that the use of Council's local discount powers from 1 April 2017 to award Revaluation Relief to those organisations that face significant increases in their business rates bills following revaluation be supported.	Principal Revenues & Debt Recovery Officer
HPC POB Allocations of CIM Fund (Agenda Item 8)	Agreed that the following recommendation of the Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Board be endorsed: a) To recommend to Council that a total of £79,289 be released from the 1 st Annual payment to the Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce for the Supply the Supplier Business Engagement project with the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That 50% of the funding should be released to enable the employment of relevant project staff when a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce and Somerset Chamber of Commerce is agreed, signed and in place before the start of the project. • That the remaining 50% of the funding should be released when a range of Key Performance Indicators that measure outputs and outcomes of the project with targets are developed and submitted by Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce and agreed by the Planning Obligations Board within 3 months of the start date of the project staff and a plan for financial sustainability of the project after the initial 2 years is developed by Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce and reported to the Board within 6 months of the start date of the project staff. 	Community and Housing Lead (HPC) – Energy Infrastructure
West Somerset Opportunity Area (Agenda Item 9)	Agreed that the contents of the report be noted and to recommend that the Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the contents of the detailed delivery plans when these are available later in the Autumn.	Economic Regeneration Manager
Seaward Way, Minehead – Development Proposals for Mixed Uses: Residential and Employment	Agreed that it be recommended to Council to approve the following proposals: (a) The sale of land to local housing provider, identified specifically for a residential scheme, on the eastern half of the site. The land sale will be subject to a conditional contract based on draft terms, as set out in the special	Assistant Director – Asset Development Projects

	<p>purchaser's offer letter (Confidential Part 2 - Appendix D).</p> <p>(b) Approve a supplementary estimate of £2.982m to the Capital Programme for this scheme, to be funded by external borrowing, to pay for the costs of planning, development, construction and professional fees. (Confidential Part 2 – appendices H & I).</p> <p>(c) Delegate Director of Growth and Development and S151 Officer the authority to proceed with the proposed development, in agreement with Asset Project Group and Lead Members (Portfolio Holder, Deputy Leader & Leader), delivering two new commercial units for rent on retained land, and:</p> <p>(i) Appoint a preferred Design and Build provider (Contractor A) as the most economically advantageous tenderer (Confidential Part 2 - Appendix F).</p> <p>(ii) Appoint a professional team of advisors to support the Council with detailed design and planning, quality and cost control, ensuring the commercial units are developed to an agreed specification, on time and within budget (Confidential Part 2 - Appendix K);</p> <p>(iii) Conclude Lease Agreement with occupier of large Light Industrial Unit (Draft Terms agreed with major business operator and its parent company as guarantor (Confidential Part 2 - Appendices L);</p> <p>(iv) Conclude Lease Agreement with occupier of new smaller unit, based on draft Heads of Terms agreed with local business operator (Confidential Part 2 - Appendix M);</p> <p>(v) Submit a planning application, following consultation and develop scheme in accordance with a future planning committee determination, within agreed programme timescales and budget (indicative milestones in Confidential Part 2 Appendix G).</p>	
--	--	--

For a record of the reasons for the decision; details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the decision-making body at the meeting at which the decision was made; a record of any conflict of interest relating to the matter decided which is declared by any member of the decision-making body which made the decision; and in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service, please use the attached link below, to the Council's website where the minutes and relevant reports can be viewed:

<https://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Council---Democracy/Council-Meetings/Cabinet-Meetings/Cabinet---6-September-2017.aspx>

Date: 7 September 2017

Weekly version of Cabinet Forward Plan published on 28 September 2017

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/17/11/02 19/01/2017	1 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held Purpose: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/17/11/03 19/01/2017	1 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding Purpose: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218
FP/17/11/04 19/01/2017	1 November 2017 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point Purpose: to consider any key issues that arise relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/17/11/05 04/06/2015	1 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Review of Financial Regulations [FR2] Purpose: to recommend to Council to approve updated Financial Regulations	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/17/11/06 26/04/2017	1 November 2017 By Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Review of the Council Tax Rebate Scheme for 2018/19 Purpose: to review the Council Tax Rebate Scheme 2018/19 for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Heather Tiso, Revenues and Benefits Manager 01823 356541
FP/17/11/06 19/04/2017	30 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Initial Budget Options Purpose: to present the updated Medium Term Financial Plan position and consider initial budget options for 2018/19 budget setting	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/17/11/07 19/04/2017	30 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Fees and charges 2018/19 Purpose: To recommend proposed fees and charges to Full Council for approval	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/17/11/08 19/04/2017	30 November 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Review of Earmarked Reserves Purpose: to consider review undertaken to ensure earmarked reserves continue to be required for their intended purpose and to return any surplus reserves to general balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/17/11/09 05/09/2017	30 November 2017 By Lead Member Environment	Title: Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan Purpose: to present the Somerset Waste Partnership's Business Plan	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Chris Hall, Assistant Director Operational Delivery 01823 356499
FP/17/11/10 28/09/2017	30 November 2017 By Lead Member Regeneration and Economic Growth	Title: HTAP (Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership) Strategic Tourism Action Plan 2018-20 Purpose: to present the HTAP Strategic Tourism Action Plan 2018-20	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Robert Downes, Tourism Officer 01984 635249
FP/18/1/01 19/01/2017	3 January 2018 By Leader of Council	Title: Corporate Performance Report 2017-18 Quarter 2 Purpose: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities and performance of council services	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Richard Doyle, Corporate Strategy and Performance Officer 01823 356309
FP/18/1/02 19/01/2017	3 January 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2 Purpose: to provide Members with details of the Council's expected financial outturn position in 2017/18 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/18/1/03 19/01/2017	3 January 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held Purpose: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/18/1/05 19/01/2017	3 January 2018 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point Purpose: to consider any key issues that arise relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/18/2/01 19/04/2017	7 February 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Draft Annual Budget and Council Tax Setting 2018/19 Purpose: to provide Members with all the information required for Council to approve the revenue budget and council tax requirement for 2018/19 for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/18/2/02 19/04/2017	7 February 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Draft Capital Programme 2018/19 Purpose: to present the draft Capital Programme 2018/19 for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/18/2/03 19/04/2017	7 February 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 Purpose: to present the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19, including the Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Prudential Indicators, for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Jo Nacey, Financial Services Manager / Deputy S151 01823 356537
FP/18/2/04 19/04/2017	7 February 2018 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point Purpose: to consider any key issues that arise relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/18/3/01 19/04/2017	7 March 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held Purpose: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/18/3/02 19/04/2017	7 March 2018 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point Purpose: to consider any key issues that arise relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/18/3/03 19/04/2017	7 March 2018 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding Purpose: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218

Note (1) – Items in bold type are regular cyclical items.

Note (2) – All Consultation Implications are referred to in individual reports.

The Cabinet comprises the following: Councillors A H Trollope-Bellew, M Chilcott, M Dewdney, A Hadley, C Morgan S J Pugsley, K H Turner and D J Westcott.

The Scrutiny Committee comprises: Councillors P H Murphy, N Thwaites, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, R Woods, I Aldridge and P Pilkington.

SRA Scrutiny 8th August 2017

The second meeting of the SRA Scrutiny committee met in 'The Luttrell Room', County Hall on Tuesday 8th August. The meeting gave us chance to reflect on the recent meeting of the SRA.

Being a fairly new body the SRA have discussed and will make a decision on their own constitution, and at their meeting they considered how often do their Officers (ie Chair) stay in post and whether it needs an independent Chair. We also had opportunity to review our own constitution as a Scrutiny panel and the call-in procedure which would be handled under the Joint Scrutiny Panel, exactly how this could work will be explained when the committee has its training day on 15th September.

The SRA End of Year report 2016/17 was brought to the committee and it was explained how it was to be distributed. This would be done widely using Internet and email. All councillors on the DC's and CC would be circulated, as would the Parish Clerks across the County. Available at <http://www.somerset-rivers-authority.org.uk/flood-risk-work/somerset-rivers-authority-end-of-year-report-2016-17/>. Having read the report circulated as a PDF document I commented on its clarity (easy reading) compared with other reports that we have from other bodies. The report had been designed to be read widely and in this I believe it should succeed. I asked the question about whether the Riparian Enabling and Enforcement Officer was yet in place, and was told that this would happen soon.

I queried whether there should be a list of Riparian owners and was informed that they hoped that communities would work with the Riparian Enabling and Enforcement Officer on this aspect. I expressed the hope that where new build had included a riparian element, that clearance of water courses should be progressed, on an ongoing basis. It was expressed that planning authorities should include the ongoing maintenance as part of the planning process.

The SRA Board papers included an update on legislative options for the SRA. It is imperative that the Councils support the SRA stance and that we encourage our MPs in Somerset to support the move to set up the precepting body. – On the question of ongoing finance we were encouraged to look at the Lincolnshire Model for financing the SRA- this would be looked at on the Training Day.

Concern was expressed about the dredging carried out upstream creating pinch points downstream. Assurances were given that this would not happen and why, would be conveyed later.

Various methods of dredging are being investigated and it was pointed out that there were economic benefits to be gained from management of the rivers, including tourism benefits if river fronts are left more attractive (i.e. a barrage on the Parrot could mean that the centre of Bridgwater would not be left with mud flats at low tide, making it more attractive).

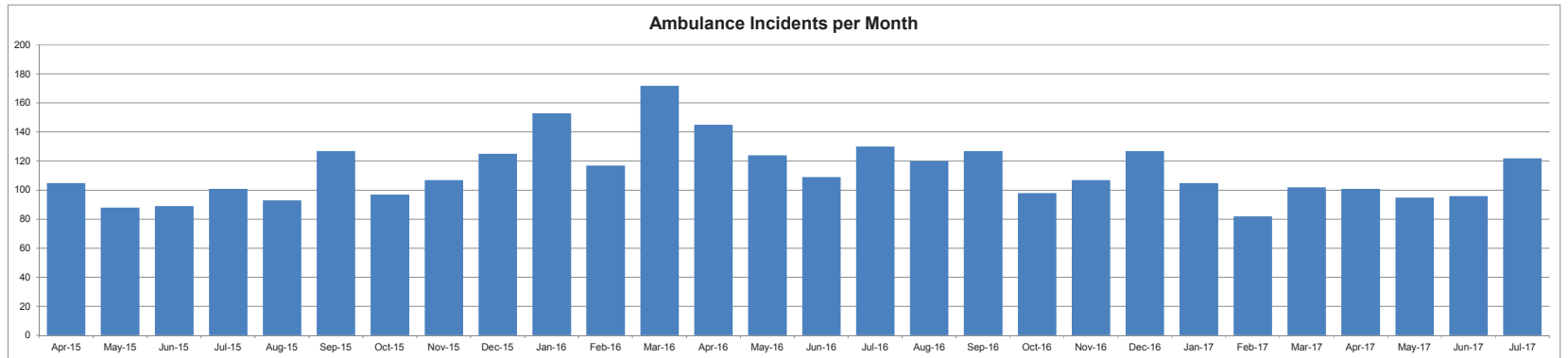
Notes for WSC Scrutiny Committee by Cllr Rosemary Woods

13/08/2017

AGENDA ITEM 8 - AMBULANCE ACTIVITY APRIL 2015 - JULY 2017

West Somerset - Ambulance Incidents for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 July 2017

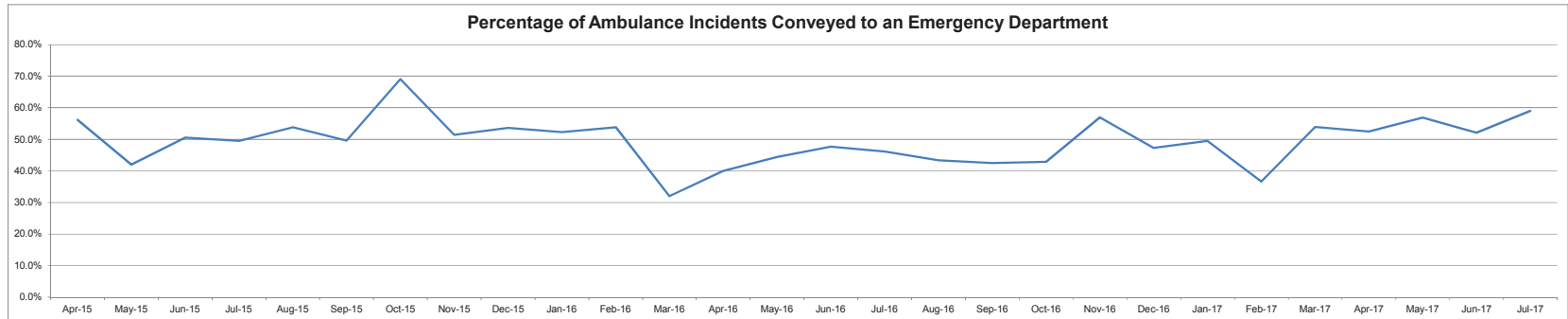
	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17
Ambulance Incidents per Month	105	88	89	101	93	127	97	107	125	153	117	172	145	124	109	130	120	127	98	107	127	105	82	102	101	95	96	122
Days in Month	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31	31	29	31	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31	31	28	31	30	31	30	31
Ambulance Incidents per Day	3.5	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.0	4.2	3.1	3.6	4.0	4.9	4.0	5.5	4.8	4.0	3.6	4.2	3.9	4.2	3.2	3.6	4.1	3.4	2.9	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.9



West Somerset - Ambulance Incident Outcomes for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 July 2017

	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17
Hear & Treat	8	14	11	13	4	20	8	6	10	6	7	55	42	8	20	14	15	15	4	9	16	12	8	5	7	7	9	5
See & Treat	26	26	21	31	25	24	14	35	36	54	40	59	32	52	27	48	45	48	45	30	46	32	34	31	36	22	27	39
See & Convey Non ED	12	11	12	7	14	20	8	11	12	13	7	3	13	9	10	8	8	10	7	7	5	9	10	11	5	12	10	6
See & Convey ED	59	37	45	50	50	63	67	55	67	80	63	55	58	55	52	60	52	54	42	61	60	52	30	55	53	54	50	72
Total	105	88	89	101	93	127	97	107	125	153	117	172	145	124	109	130	120	127	98	107	127	105	82	102	101	95	96	122

Hear & Treat	7.6%	15.9%	12.4%	12.9%	4.3%	15.7%	8.2%	5.6%	8.0%	3.9%	6.0%	32.0%	29.0%	6.5%	18.3%	10.8%	12.5%	11.8%	4.1%	8.4%	12.6%	11.4%	9.8%	4.9%	6.9%	7.4%	9.4%	4.1%
See & Treat	24.8%	29.5%	23.6%	30.7%	26.9%	18.9%	14.4%	32.7%	28.8%	35.3%	34.2%	34.3%	22.1%	41.9%	24.8%	36.9%	37.5%	37.8%	45.9%	28.0%	36.2%	30.5%	41.5%	30.4%	35.6%	23.2%	28.1%	32.0%
See & Convey Non ED	11.4%	12.5%	13.5%	6.9%	15.1%	15.7%	8.2%	10.3%	9.6%	8.5%	6.0%	1.7%	9.0%	7.3%	9.2%	6.2%	6.7%	7.9%	7.1%	6.5%	3.9%	8.6%	12.2%	10.8%	5.0%	12.6%	10.4%	4.9%
See & Convey ED	56.2%	42.0%	50.6%	49.5%	53.8%	49.6%	69.1%	51.4%	53.6%	52.3%	53.8%	32.0%	40.0%	44.4%	47.7%	46.2%	43.3%	42.5%	42.9%	57.0%	47.2%	49.5%	36.6%	53.9%	52.5%	56.8%	52.1%	59.0%



Definitions	
Hear & Treat	The patient receives advice or a referral to other services over the telephone without the need to despatch an ambulance vehicle response.
See & Treat	The patient is treated and discharged at the scene, including in their own home.
See & Convey Non ED	The patient is conveyed by ambulance to a healthcare setting other than an emergency department.
See & Convey ED	The patient is conveyed by ambulance to an emergency department.

Category 1 Incident Response Times - April to July 2017

Green	00 to 08
Yellow	08 to 09
Light Blue	10 to 11
Blue	11 to 12
Dark Blue	12 to 13
Red	15 to 16
Purple	16 to 17
Black	19 to 20

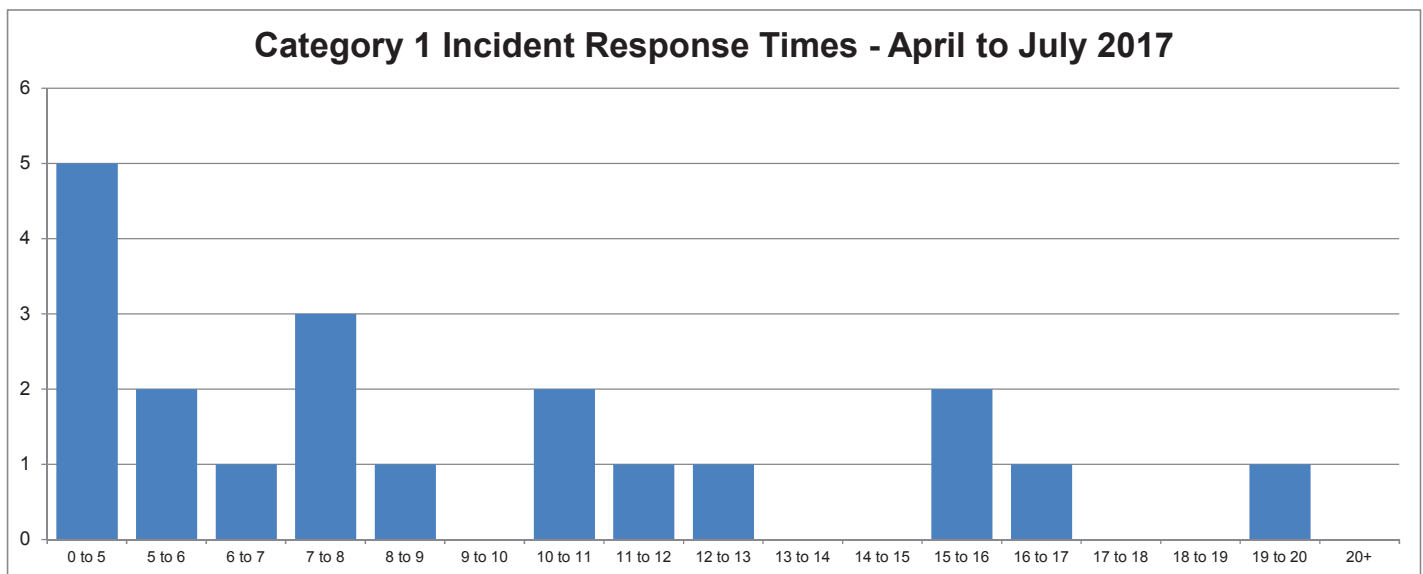


AGENDA ITEM 8 - CATEGORY 1 RESPONSE TIMES

West Somerset - Category 1 Incident Response Times - April to July 2017

	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Total
Number of Category 1 Incidents	4	4	4	8	20

Response Time (Mins)	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Jul-17
0 to 5	3	1	0	1	5
5 to 6	0	0	1	1	2
6 to 7	0	0	1	0	1
7 to 8	0	2	0	1	3
8 to 9	0	0	0	1	1
9 to 10	0	0	0	0	0
10 to 11	0	0	0	2	2
11 to 12	1	0	0	0	1
12 to 13	0	0	0	1	1
13 to 14	0	0	0	0	0
14 to 15	0	0	0	0	0
15 to 16	0	0	1	1	2
16 to 17	0	1	0	0	1
17 to 18	0	0	0	0	0
18 to 19	0	0	0	0	0
19 to 20	0	0	1	0	1
20+	0	0	0	0	0



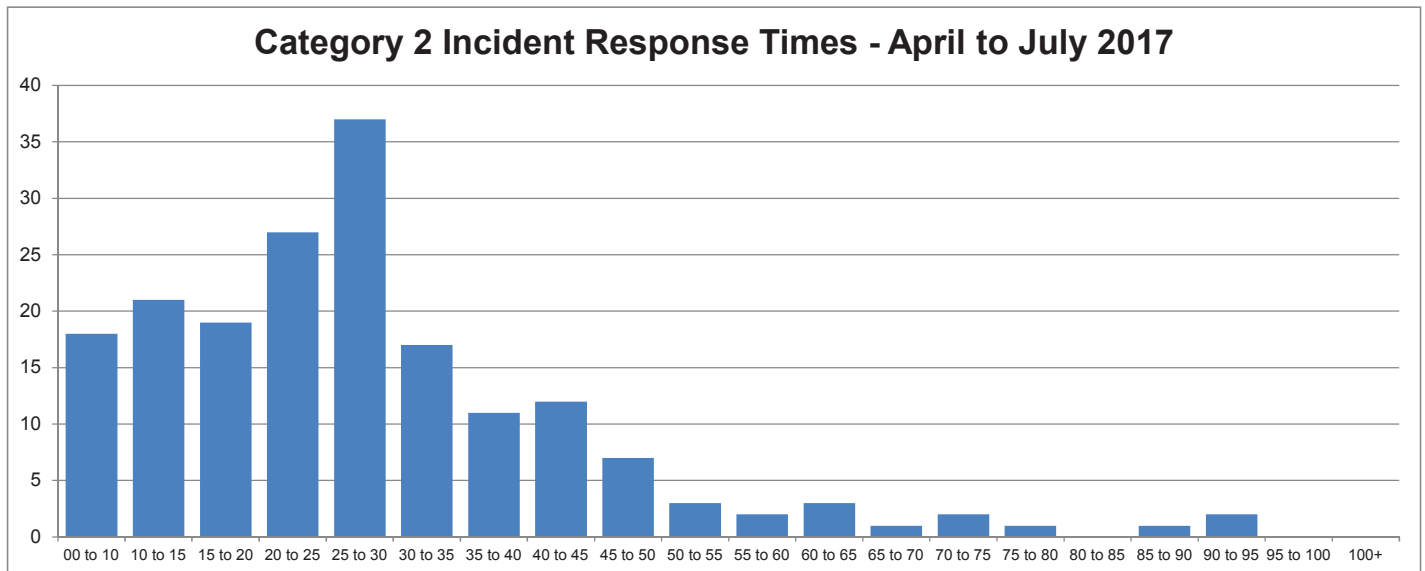
Definitions	
South Western Ambulance Service is participating in the national Ambulance Response Programme (ARP) pilot. The final category definitions and associated national response time targets are expected to be published and implemented in early Winter 2017. See notes provided for more information on categories.	
Category 1	Category 1 is for calls about people with time-critical life-threatening injuries and illnesses.
Category 2	Category 2 is for emergency calls.
Category 3	Category 3 is for urgent calls.
Category 4 (999)	Category 4 is for less urgent calls.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - CATEGORY 2 RESPONSE TIMES

West Somerset - Category 2 Incident Response Times - April to July 2017

	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Total
Number of Category 2 Incidents	45	39	41	59	184

Response Time (Mins)	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Jul-17
00 to 10	4	5	2	7	18
10 to 15	7	6	3	5	21
15 to 20	8	2	3	6	19
20 to 25	6	6	8	7	27
25 to 30	12	8	9	8	37
30 to 35	2	3	3	9	17
35 to 40	1	2	3	5	11
40 to 45	1	5	4	2	12
45 to 50	1	1	1	4	7
50 to 55	0	0	2	1	3
55 to 60	1	0	1	0	2
60 to 65	1	0	0	2	3
65 to 70	1	0	0	0	1
70 to 75	0	0	1	1	2
75 to 80	0	1	0	0	1
80 to 85	0	0	0	0	0
85 to 90	0	0	0	1	1
90 to 95	0	0	1	1	2
95 to 100	0	0	0	0	0
100+	0	0	0	0	0

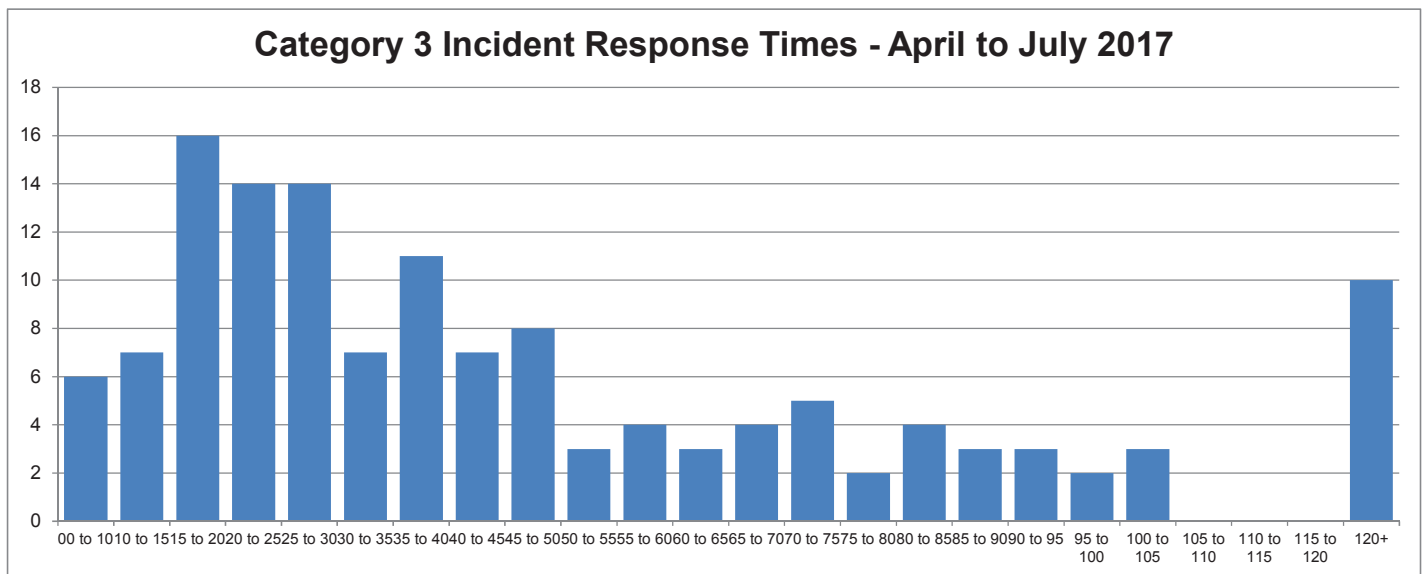


Definitions	
South Western Ambulance Service is participating in the national Ambulance Response Programme (ARP) pilot. The final category definitions and associated national response time targets are expected to be published and implemented in early Winter 2017. See notes provided for more information on categories.	
Category 1	Category 1 is for calls about people with time-critical life-threatening injuries and illnesses.
Category 2	Category 2 is for emergency calls.
Category 3	Category 3 is for urgent calls.
Category 4 (999)	Category 4 is for less urgent calls.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - CATEGORY 3 RESPONSE TIMES

West Somerset - Category 3 Incident Response Times - April to July 2017

	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Total
Number of Category 3 Incidents	34	32	29	41	136
Response Time (Mins)	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Total
00 to 10	2	2	1	1	6
10 to 15	4	1	1	1	7
15 to 20	4	3	4	5	16
20 to 25	4	1	5	4	14
25 to 30	4	1	4	5	14
30 to 35	2	1	1	3	7
35 to 40	2	4	0	5	11
40 to 45	3	2	0	2	7
45 to 50	0	2	2	4	8
50 to 55	2	0	1	0	3
55 to 60	1	1	1	1	4
60 to 65	0	0	2	1	3
65 to 70	0	0	1	3	4
70 to 75	2	3	0	0	5
75 to 80	0	1	0	1	2
80 to 85	1	2	1	0	4
85 to 90	0	2	1	0	3
90 to 95	0	2	0	1	3
95 to 100	0	0	2	0	2
100 to 105	2	1	0	0	3
105 to 110	0	0	0	0	0
110 to 115	0	0	0	0	0
115 to 120	0	0	0	0	0
120+	1	3	2	4	10



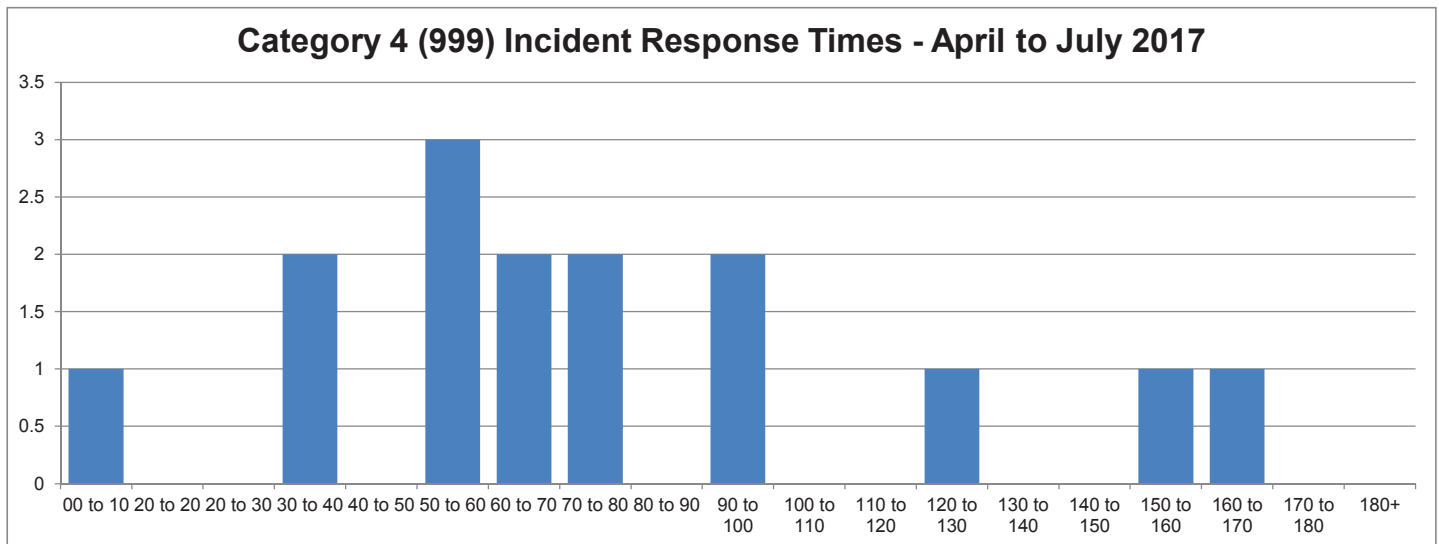
Definitions	
South Western Ambulance Service is participating in the national Ambulance Response Programme (ARP) pilot. The final category definitions and associated national response time targets are expected to be published and implemented in early Winter 2017. See notes provided for more information on categories.	
Category 1	Category 1 is for calls about people with time-critical life-threatening injuries and illnesses.
Category 2	Category 2 is for emergency calls.
Category 3	Category 3 is for urgent calls.
Category 4 (999)	Category 4 is for less urgent calls.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - CATEGORY 4 RESPONSE TIMES

West Somerset - Category 4 (999) Incident Response Times - April to July 2017

	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Total
Number of Category 4 (999) Incidents	4	3	5	3	15

Response Time (Mins)	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Jul-17
00 to 10	1	0	0	0	1
20 to 20	0	0	0	0	0
20 to 30	0	0	0	0	0
30 to 40	1	0	1	0	2
40 to 50	0	0	0	0	0
50 to 60	0	1	1	1	3
60 to 70	1	0	0	1	2
70 to 80	0	0	2	0	2
80 to 90	0	0	0	0	0
90 to 100	1	1	0	0	2
100 to 110	0	0	0	0	0
110 to 120	0	0	0	0	0
120 to 130	0	0	1	0	1
130 to 140	0	0	0	0	0
140 to 150	0	0	0	0	0
150 to 160	0	0	0	1	1
160 to 170	0	1	0	0	1
170 to 180	0	0	0	0	0
180+	0	0	0	0	0



Definitions	
South Western Ambulance Service is participating in the national Ambulance Response Programme (ARP) pilot. The final category definitions and associated national response time targets are expected to be published and implemented in early Winter 2017. See notes provided for more information on categories.	
Category 1	Category 1 is for calls about people with time-critical life-threatening injuries and illnesses.
Category 2	Category 2 is for emergency calls.
Category 3	Category 3 is for urgent calls.
Category 4 (999)	Category 4 is for less urgent calls.

Report Number: WSC 115/17

West Somerset Council

Scrutiny Committee 26th October 2017

Role of Planning Enforcement in West Somerset

This matter is the responsibility of Cabinet Member Cllr Dewdney

Report Author: Tim Burton Assistant Director Planning and Environment

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the legislative background for Planning Enforcement and sets out how it is applied across the West Somerset Planning Area

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted

3 Legislative background

- 3.1 A breach of planning control is defined in section 171A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as:

- the carrying out of development without the required planning permission; or
- failing to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted.

- 3.2 Local planning authorities have responsibility for taking whatever enforcement action may be necessary, in the public interest, in their administrative areas.

There is a range of ways of tackling alleged breaches of planning control, and national guidance requires local planning authorities to act in a proportionate way.

Councils have discretion to take enforcement action, when they regard it as expedient to do so having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations. It is important to stress that the taking of Enforcement action and is discretionary and should only be taken where demonstrable harm is caused by the breach.

Enforcement action should not be taken simply because a planning permission is required, but an application has not been submitted.

In considering any enforcement action, the local planning authority should have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular paragraph 207:

Effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate to do so.

3.3 Enforcement action can be taken through the following:

- Breach of condition notice
- Enforcement notice
- Stop notice
- Injunction

These notices require the provision of information or require works to be carried out or an activity to cease in order to remedy a breach of planning control.

3.4 Once a notice is served the requirements, which are stated in the notice, must be complied with. OR where appropriate an appeal made against the notice - but some notices cannot be appealed against.

3.5 There are then instances, which constitute an offence triable in the Courts, such as,

- Non-compliance with a formal notice
- Unauthorised works to a listed building
- Display of an unauthorised sign
- Unauthorised works to a protected tree
- Unauthorised work to a tree in a Conservation Area
-

3.6 Formal action should only be taken as a last resort.

4 How the Council handles a breach of control

4.1 The purpose of a Planning Enforcement service is to protect and enhance the environment in which we live and work and we aim to resolve breaches of planning control, where possible, without the need for formal enforcement proceedings. However, West Somerset Council does exercise its discretion to take, when expedient, appropriate enforcement action. However, the Council has an equal duty to both a complainant and the alleged offender and seeks to address any issues fairly and without bias.

4.2 There are circumstances where the Council may choose not to use its enforcement powers. These areas include:

- Complaints about unauthorised development or uses not received in writing
- Boundary disputes between neighbours
- Property and land ownership issues which are not planning related
- Complaints received anonymously about unauthorised development or uses - we will NOT investigate anonymous complaints unless there are special circumstances that would override the normal policy
- Persistent complaints about unauthorised development or uses which have previously been investigated and a conclusion reached
- Vexatious or malicious complaints about unauthorised development or uses
- Complaints about unauthorised developments or uses which are more appropriately dealt with by another organisation or agency
- Breaches of covenants between landowners
- Competition between businesses.
- *[NB this list is not exhaustive]*

When a complaint is received which relates to one or more of the above areas or is assessed to be about a matter which is not covered by the scope of the planning system we will write to the complainant and explain why the Council cannot get involved.

4.3 In deciding whether enforcement action is taken, Councils should, where relevant, have regard to the potential impact on the health, housing needs and welfare of those affected by the proposed action, and those who are affected by a breach of planning control.

4.4 Development becomes immune from enforcement if no action is taken:

- Within 4 years of substantial completion for a breach of planning control consisting of operational development;
- Within 4 years for an unauthorised change of use to a single dwellinghouse;
- Within 10 years for any other breach of planning control (essentially other changes of use).

Normal practice is to request the submission of a retrospective application in the first instance. If the application is approved no further action will be taken.

All Planning Enforcement related decisions are delegated to the Assistant Director Planning and Environment.

5. Number of complaints and how they are reported

5.1 The Council deals with planning enforcement on a complaint based process rather than by development or condition monitoring. This is normal practice for most local planning authorities due to limited budgets for this work and the NPPF advising that local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. If an unauthorised development is considered to be

causing harm, it is probable that a complaint would be received from either a member of the public, a parish/town council, and or local Member.

5.2 The table below shows the number of enforcement cases opened and closed over the last 5 years:

Year	Cases Opened	Cases Closed
2013	114	114
2014	125	115
2015	86	84
2016	89	55
2017 (as of 11 th October)	62	65

5.3 Cases can be closed for a number of reasons which include:

- No breach of planning control as the works are either permitted development in accordance with an extant planning consent.
- The breach is rectified by it being removed, ceased or changed to a level that does not need planning consent.
- The breach is immune from enforcement action based on the length of time that has occurred (either 4 or 10 years based on the type of planning breach).
- The breach is de-minimis or does not result in harm that would justify the serving of an enforcement notice. This is also described as 'not expedient to take further action'.
- A retrospective planning application is submitted and subsequently approved.
- An enforcement notice is complied with
- And appeal against the refusal of planning permission or the serving of an enforcement notice is allowed.

5.4 As of 11th October 2017, there are currently 62 Planning Enforcement cases that are open and currently under investigation and/or unresolved.

6. One Team Enforcement resources

6.1 The level of dedicated Planning Enforcement resource provided by the One Team across the Taunton Deane and West Somerset Planning areas is 2 full time equivalent posts. The split is 80% Taunton Deane and 20% West Somerset.

6.2 Since the creation of the One Team there have been resource issues in this area resulting from long term staff sickness as well as the retirement of a long standing member of staff. There is currently a vacancy, but in light of the forthcoming transformation it has been decided to fill this post through an Agency. Stacey Salter works 3 days per week.

6.3 Stacey and the other Enforcement Officer (Ann Dunford) investigate complaints whilst assessment as to whether it is expedient to take action is carried out by Planning Officers.

7 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

7.1 Any decision to take enforcement action needs to take into account the policies of the West Somerset Local Plan as well as other material planning considerations including the economic impact of the decision.

8 Finance / Resource Implications

8.1 The cost of the providing an enforcement service comes from the general fund

9 Legal Implications (if any)

9.1 SHAPE Legal Services provide legal support in this area, which at times can involve formal legal action.

10 Environmental Impact Implications (if any)

10.1 Environmental considerations are often critical in Planning enforcement decisions.

11 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)

11.1 The Council needs to demonstrate that it has consciously thought about the Public Sector Equality Duty in all its decision making.

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

Contact Officers

Name	Tim Burton	Name	
Direct Dial	01823 257861	Direct Dial	
Email	t.burton@tauntondeane.gov.uk	Email	

Report Number: WSC 116/17

West Somerset Council

Scrutiny Committee 26 October 2017

Review of Council Tax Rebate scheme for 2018/19

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Mandy Chilcott

Report Author: Heather Tiso, Revenues & Benefits Service Manager

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on our Council Tax Rebate (CTR) scheme as well as setting the background and context for reviewing our CTR scheme for Working Age applicants from 2018/19.
- 1.2 The Council is legally required to give annual consideration on whether to revise its local Council Tax Rebate (CTR) scheme and to consult with interested parties if it wishes to change the scheme.
- 1.3 On 25 May 2017, the Corporate Policy Advisory Group agreed options to take to public consultation for our CTR scheme for 2018/19.
- 1.4 We have now undertaken consultation on the agreed options and consideration must be given to the scheme for the financial year 2018/19 that will require approval by Full Council by 31 January 2018.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee having regard to the consultation response and the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA - see [Appendix 3](#)), recommends the Council amends the current CTR scheme to that illustrated in [Appendix 2, Forecast D](#). This will award entitlement to working age recipients based on bands of income and will:
 - a) increase the maximum support available to working age recipients to 85% of their Council Tax liability;
 - b) apply a flat rate deduction of £5 a week for each non-dependant;
 - c) disregard carers' allowance from the income used to work out CTR.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Committee recommends the Council provides extra assistance for young people who have left local authority care, by increasing maximum support to 100% of the Council Tax liability for single applicants up to the age of 25 where their weekly income is less than £75.00.
- 2.3 The Scrutiny Committee recommends the Council mitigates the effects in moving to a Banded Income CTR scheme for working age applicants by inviting applicants with protected characteristics who will receive reduced CTR from 1 April 2018 to submit a claim for a discretionary reduction.

3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
The increased complexity of financial planning that could result from growing pressure from the Council Tax Rebate scheme if funding reductions are not fully addressed	3	4	12
<i>Cautious assumptions on recovery rate and therefore yield from the scheme.</i>	2	4	8
Council incurs an unacceptably high-level of debt because of people's inability to make the payments particularly if the scheme is less generous. Lower Council Tax collection rate and bad debts. There will be a point if people are asked to pay more Council Tax where the liability is too high for them and they will not pay anything.	4	4	16
<i>Robust arrears management procedures to maximise collection rate and prudent assumptions on collection rates council increases bad debt provision with budget. Maximise take-up of all discounts/exemptions/ hardship relief. Monthly monitoring of performance against targets.</i>	3	4	12
Higher administrative costs	3	3	9
<i>Simplify CTR scheme to reduce administrative costs associated with assessment and debt collection costs while maximising council tax collected</i>	2	3	6
Potential growth in the number of claimants.	4	4	16
<i>Realistic assumption on caseload growth based on trends</i>	3	4	12
If West Somerset's population increases, including an increase in the population segment currently receiving CTR, demand for CTR could increase against funding from the Government, thereby increasing the funding gap. Such population migration may occur if the CTR scheme is more generous than those of neighbouring boroughs. Caseload increases (e.g. Major employer loss)	3	4	12
<i>Demand and cost of scheme monitored regularly and material changes reflected in the MTFP</i>	2	4	8
Council fails to meet obligations under relevant equality legislation in adopting a scheme	3	4	12
<i>Carry out consultation on proposed scheme. Consider the results and findings as part of the approval of any scheme. Make reasonable adjustments through application of any agreed scheme.</i>	2	4	8

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact							

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

3.1 In addition to the principle risks outlined above and on the previous page, a number of other factors have been considered:

Fairness: There is also a risk that scheme may be perceived as being unfair. This risk will be studied in line with the Government’s commitment to incentivise work, the recommended scheme requires a contribution. To mitigate this, all residents will have access to a discretionary fund.

Culture of non-payment: As we are mainly asking CTR recipients to make only a small contribution to their Council Tax bill, collection and recovery strategies may not be cost-effective, and small debts may be written off. This may over time develop into a culture of non-payment, where it becomes increasingly difficult and costly to recover small amounts of Council Tax from those who can least afford to pay it. We have mitigated this risk by minimising the level of contribution which is supported by robust arrears management procedures.

4 Background

4.1 Responsibility for Council Tax Rebate (CTR) passed to Local Authorities on 1 April 2013. Government also passed funding for CTR to Local Government, but reduced the amount of funding compared to the costs of the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme where responsibility for CTB had been held by central Government and funded through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

4.2 Local Authorities therefore had to decide whether to absorb the funding reduction across other areas of their budget or pass it on to recipients of CTR by requiring them to make a contribution to their overall Council Tax bill.

- 4.3 Billing Authorities were tasked with designing a CTR scheme for people of working age, while rules for people of pension age are set in regulations prescribed by the Government. This means people of pension age continue to receive assistance at no less amount than had been available under the CTB scheme.
- 4.4 Approaches to the design of local CTR schemes by individual Councils have varied greatly. In designing their local schemes, a few authorities have absorbed the funding reduction passed on by Government, without passing on the cut to residents eligible for CTR by requiring them to contribute to their Council Tax bill. Other Councils have asked households to make a contribution to their annual Council Tax bill for the first time, in some cases as much as 45% of their total bill. In 2017/18, 264 Local Authorities (81%) require everyone to pay at least some Council Tax regardless of income, 35 more than in 2013/14. From April 2017, just 37 Councils (11%) continue to provide support at the level paid under the former CTB scheme.
- 4.5 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) provides funding through the annual Settlement Funding Assessment (comprising Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates Baseline) to help meet the cost of localised CTR schemes. Each of the major precepting authorities in Somerset received the initial funding based on their share of Council Tax receipts. In West Somerset, the initial grant awarded to precepting authorities was £2,831,449, with West Somerset Council's share of this grant being £265,741 (based on a 9.39% share). From 1 April 2014, funding for localised CTR was incorporated in the LGFS and is not separately identified.
- 4.6 It is now impossible to ascertain funding provided for CTR in the LGFS. Government grants to councils are being phased out and local government will move to 100% business rates retention by 2020. It has not been confirmed, but this may well be how councils will be expected to fund CTR schemes in future.
- 4.7 The approach taken by many authorities has been to assume the funding for CTR has been reduced at the same rate as the SFA. The SFA has reduced by 38.7% in cash terms since 2013/14. Therefore, in applying this methodology, the funding available for Localised CTR has reduced by £1,095,771 to £1,735,678.
- 4.8 In 2016/17, we paid CTR of £1,602,175 for people of pensionable age. Based on the assumptions stated in paragraph 4.7, this would leave just £133k available to spend on CTR for people of working age. As our expenditure for working age recipients in 2016/17 was £937,669, this leaves a funding shortfall of £801,166. Based on its precepting share of Council Tax for 2017/18 of 9.47%, the share of this shortfall in funding for West Somerset Council equates to £75,870.
- 4.9 The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) subsidises the cost of administering Housing Benefit, while the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) provides an annual grant towards the cost for CTR administration. However, funding has steadily decreased and is likely to be removed entirely with the move to 100% business rate retention in 2020.
- 4.10 Until recently, the administration of our localised CTR scheme has been both cost effective and efficient as for the majority of claims we have been able to use information supplied by claimants for a Housing Benefit claim or directly from the Department for Work and Pensions. However, CTR administration has become increasingly difficult since the roll out of the "full service for Universal Credit (UC) in October 2016, with the number of working age customers claiming UC significantly increasing.

- 4.11 We receive information from the DWP on any variations to the customer's income and for many customers, such changes occur every month. As our CTR scheme does not contain any "de-minimus" for income variances, we need to reassess the amount of CTR entitlement. In changing the CTR award, we then need to issue an amended Council Tax bill and adjust any direct debit arrangements to reflect revised instalments. Changing payment arrangements can result in cancellation of the next direct debit, with instalments effectively delayed by one month. Where such changes take place every month, it is possible for Direct Debits to be continually set back so the customer then needs to pay a lump sum at the end of the financial year.
- 4.12 For the reasons outlined above, administration of the CTR scheme could become progressively financially burdensome, as well as being increasingly complex for customers. In addition, as working age customers need to submit claims for UC online we need to be mindful that in simplifying our CTR scheme, we support people in adapting to the digital agenda.
- 4.13 This report presents the Corporate Scrutiny Committee with possible options to reduce the projected shortfall as well as simplifying the CTR scheme to not only make it easier for our customers, but also to contain what could be increasing administrative costs.
- 4.14 To comply with the law, any changes that the Council is considering to the operation of the scheme must be subject to a consultation process and be decided upon by Full Council. Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to confirm their preferred options for changing the CTR scheme for working age applicants in 2018/19, with a final decision to be taken by Full Council at the meeting on 13 December 2017.

5 West Somerset Council's CTR Scheme

- 5.1 On 11 December 2012, the Council adopted a Local Council Tax Rebate scheme for 2013/14 that was largely based on the former national Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme. From 1 April 2013, those of pension age received support of up to 100% of their Council Tax liability, while the maximum support for those of working age was set at 85%. In designing our CTR scheme, we considered customers' ability to pay and the collectability of the resultant Council Tax liability. For people of working age, our scheme included the following key elements:
- Maximum support was 85% of Council Tax;
 - Increased non-dependant deductions;
 - No Second adult rebate;
 - Earned income disregards are at increased levels than those offered under CTB;
 - Hardship fund of £22.5k for short-term help (this is a Collection Fund commitment and not fully funded by WSC).
- 5.2 While we have some discretion on designing our CTR scheme for working age people, the Government said we must protect vulnerable groups. There is no definition of which groups are counted as "vulnerable" as each authority has to make its own assessment. However, the Government highlighted Local Authority statutory duties regarding:
- Children and duties under the 2010 Child Poverty Act to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty
 - Disabled people and duties under the Equality Act 2010
 - Homelessness Prevention and duties under the 1996 Housing Act to prevent homelessness with special regard to vulnerable groups.

- 5.3 Our scheme considers disabled people's needs and those responsible for children. It fully ignores income from a War Disablement or War Widows Pension. Also following the Government's direction, our scheme strengthens work incentives and does not discourage people to move off benefits and into work or to stay in work.
- 5.4 Council Tax Rebate (CTR) was unchanged until 2016/17 when as a consequence of significant cuts to funding, the Council decided to amend our CTR scheme for working age applicants in 2016/17 by:
- Removing entitlement to applicants with capital over £6,000; and
 - Applying a Minimum Income for Self-Employed applicants; and
 - Paying CTR at a level that would be no more than for a Band C property; and
 - Disregarding maintenance received for children.
- 5.5 In agreeing our scheme for 2017/18, the Council decided to align the CTR scheme with some changes made by the Government to other welfare benefits. As a consequence, CTR for working age applicants from 1 April 2017 was amended as follows:
- Maximum CTR reduced from 85% to 80%
 - Maximum backdating of CTR reduced from 6 months to 1 month;
 - Family premium not included in the applicable amount for new applicants, or existing recipients who would otherwise have a new entitlement to the premium;
 - Work Related Activity component not included in the applicable amount for new claimants of Employment and Support Allowance;
 - Removal of child allowance in applicable amount for third and any subsequent children born after 1 April 2017 but protection for some customers;
 - Reduction in the allowable period of temporary absence outside Great Britain from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.
- 5.6 In annual billing for 2017/18, West Somerset Council sent Council Tax bills that after the award of CTR, totalled more than £22.7million. Approximately 17% of residents receive financial support through CTR, with just under 7% of those liable to pay some Council Tax, being CTR recipients of working age.
- 5.7 There were 3,531 people who moved from the Council Tax Benefit scheme to the localised CTR scheme. At 31 March 2017, this had reduced to 2,941. Key information on CTR caseload, spending and budgets is shown below and on the following page:

Claimant type	% of total claims	Caseload at 31 March 2017	% of total spend	CTR Expenditure
Working Age	43%	1,262	37%	£937,669
Pension Age	57%	1,679	63%	£1,602,175
Total	100%	2,941	100%	£5,377,970

Table 5.7.1

Authority	CTR Budget
West Somerset Council (9.63%)	£260,935
Parishes (4.37%)	£118,830
Somerset County Council (72.01%)	£1,915,812
Avon and Somerset Police (11.87%)	£315,736
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (5.32%)	£141,661
Total Budget	£2,752,974

Table 5.7.2

Comparative data	
Council Tax Benefit awarded 2012/13	£3,105,112
Council Tax Rebate awarded 2016/17	£2,539,844
Reduction in CTR expenditure in comparison to CTB (18%)	£565,268
Council Tax Benefit claims @ 31 March 2013	3,531
Council Tax Rebate claims @ 31 March 2017	2,941
Reduction in CTR caseload in comparison to CTB (17%)	590
Council Tax Rebate Budget 2016/17	£2,752,974
Council Tax Rebate awarded 2016/17	£2,539,844
Saving in CTR awarded in 2016/17 in comparison to budget	£213,130

Table 5.7.3

5.8 Members will see from the tables above that the cost of our CTR scheme has reduced considerably, both through the implementation of our local policy and the trend in demand / eligibility for financial assistance. However, there are a number of factors potentially affecting the ongoing reduction in costs and CTR recipients, namely:

- A downturn in the economy generally (as experienced in 2008 until 2013); or
- A downturn in the local economy such as a local business going into liquidation or a reducing labour force; or
- An increase in Council Tax above the increase in allowances under the scheme.

6 Collection Activity and Debt Profile for 2016/17

6.1 The households liable for Council Tax increased from 17,595 in 2012/13 to 17,791 by 31 March 2017. While bringing additional income from Council Tax, this growth has increased the demand for services.

6.2 The net collectable amount for Council Tax in 2016/17 increased by nearly £3m in comparison to 2012/13, while the percentage collected has also increased from 97.52% to 97.91%. This has resulted in additional income for West Somerset of £284k based on its preceptor share of 9.48%.

	2012/13	2016/17	Difference since 2012/13	% change since 2012/13
Council Tax due	£18,716,143	£21,706,252	£2,990,109	16.0% ↑
Council Tax Collected (in year)	£18,252,909 (97.52%)	£21,252,772 (97.91%)	£2,999,863	16.4% ↑

Table 6.2.1

6.3 Overall, the Council Tax outstanding for 2016/17 was £453,480. Council Tax outstanding for working age CTR recipients was £77,913. Therefore, while working age CTR recipients represent just 7% of households, the value of their debt equates to 17% of Council Tax outstanding at 31 March 2017. More information on the breakdown of Council Tax arrears for CTR recipients is shown in [Appendix 4](#). In some instances, significant effort is required to collect relatively small sums of money and that effort may not be economical when balanced against the value of the debt owed. Furthermore, the impact of passing enforcement costs on to residents will only increase the level of the debt further.

7 Council Tax Rebate Scheme 2018/19

7.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 states that before making a scheme we must consult with any major precepting authorities, publish a draft scheme and then consult with other such persons who are likely to have an interest in the operation of such a scheme. We must set a realistic timeframe for consultation to ensure we can seek feedback from all appropriate individuals and groups in the community.

7.2 Consultation with precepting authorities (Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police, and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority took place on 19 June 2017. Public consultation started on 3 July 2017 and ended on 27 August 2017. At the closing date, we had received 259 responses. Full details of the consultation are shown in [Appendix 1](#). Information below shows a summary of the 3 options on which we consulted, as well as the response received.

7.3 Option 1 - Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income

7.3.1 This option involves setting bands of awards based on an applicant's net income (and that of their partner). Whilst this is the least complex option to administer and potentially provides less sophisticated protection for some groups, it would be simpler to administer. This could be an important factor as the Council anticipates a falling central government administration grant which will mean the Council will potentially bear a greater proportion if not all of the administration costs of any new scheme in the years ahead.

7.3.2 Maximum support available to all working age applicants could be increased from 80% to 85% for those applicants that are on a particularly low income. The bands below are likely to give more help to those in low paid work or with limited income from benefits:

- 85% discount for those whose income falls within Band 1
- 75% discount for those whose income falls within Band 2
- 60% discount for those whose income falls within Band 3
- 45% discount for those whose income falls within Band 4
- 30% discount for those whose income falls within Band 5
- 15% discount for those whose income falls within Band 6

7.3.3 As an alternative to the various deductions we currently apply to CTR based on a non-dependant's income, we could apply a "flat-rate" deduction of £5 for each non-dependant to weekly CTR entitlement for working age recipients.

7.3.4 Income from earnings would be after the deduction of tax, national insurance and 50% of any contribution to a pension scheme. To incentivise employment or self-employment, we could continue to ignore (disregard) some income. For most customers that are working, we would disregard:

- £10 a week for single people
- £20 a week for couples
- £37.50 a week for lone parents
- £30 a week for those with qualifying disabilities

7.3.5 In common with Universal Credit rules, no blanket protection would be provided to households receiving disability benefits, but **income from Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments would not count as household income**. Similarly, we would continue to ignore (disregard) child benefit and maintenance received for children. If we were to include disregarded income for children or customers with disabilities in any future CTR scheme, it could be seen as having a negative effect on provisions contained within the Child Poverty Act and the Equality Act 2010. In addition, a court case has established that DLA and PIP should be fully disregarded when considering a Discretionary Hardship Payment.

7.3.6 To provide a fair scheme that recognises the additional needs of multi-person households and families the table below shows the income limits for each band:

CTR Band		Single people	Couple no Children	Couple with one child	Lone Parent with one child	Couple with two or more children	Lone Parent with two or more children
85%	1	£75.00	£115.00	£165.00	£125.00	£215.00	£175.00
75%	2	£125.00	£165.00	£215.00	£175.00	£265.00	£225.00
60%	3	£175.00	£215.00	£265.00	£225.00	£315.00	£275.00
45%	4	£225.00	£265.00	£315.00	£275.00	£365.00	£325.00
30%	5	£275.00	£315.00	£365.00	£325.00	£415.00	£375.00
15%	6	£325.00	£365.00	£415.00	£375.00	£465.00	£425.00

Table 7.3.6.1.

7.3.7 In applying the limits shown in the table shown above, customers with a weekly income in excess of the limits shown for Band 6 would not receive any Council Tax Rebate. In common with our current scheme, customers with capital of over £6,000 would similarly not be entitled to assistance.

7.3.8 A banded discount scheme for working age recipients based on limits in the above table, and in applying the assumptions set out in paragraphs 7.3.3 to 7.3.5 would result in an additional cost of the CTR scheme for working age recipients of £2,573 ([Appendix 2, Forecast B](#)). As any cost will be shared between the precepting authorities, West Somerset Council's share would be £244.

7.3.9 The cost in paragraph 7.3.8, does not allow for any further potential mitigation the Council may wish to apply to those with protected characteristics. In mitigating the effects of a banded CTR scheme, the Council could apply extra protection to those with protected characteristics. For example, the Council could provide extra support for households where there are

- a) 3 or more children, where a child is under 5 years old. This would mean the additional cost of a CTR scheme based in bands of income of £12,653 (with WSC's share being £1,198). See [Forecast C](#);
- b) caring responsibilities for people with disabilities and carer's allowance is in payment. This would result in an additional cost of £7,138 (with WSC's share being £676). See [Forecast D](#);

The additional cost of providing protection outlined in both a) and b) would be £17,125 (with WSC's share being £1,630). See [Forecast E](#).

7.3.10 Adjustment to either the percentage of the discount applied, or to income limits would result in increased or decreased expenditure and varying entitlement for different categories of CTR recipients.

7.3.11 If the Council decides to change the existing CTR scheme to one based on bands of income, but agrees to retaining maximum CTR at 80% of the Council Tax liability, this would result in a saving to the CTR scheme for working age recipients of £43,357 - see [Forecast I](#). As any saving will be shared between the precepting authorities, West Somerset Council's share would be £5,148. The saving in applying the protection shown in 7.3.9.a) where maximum CTR is set at 80% would be reduced to £45,264, with WSC's share being £4,287 - see [Forecast J](#), while in applying the protection shown in 7.3.9.b), the saving would be £50,023, WSC's share being £4,737 - see [Forecast K](#). In applying protection outlined in both a) and b), the saving would be £40,992, with WSC's share being £3,882 - see [Forecast L](#).

7.3.12 The Council could also decide some customers require increased support to assist in meeting their Council Tax liability, for example, Council Tax Rebate of up to 100% could be provided for those leaving care until they are 25 years old. According to information supplied by Somerset County Council on 18 July 2017, there are currently 10 care leavers living within West Somerset who would benefit from such a change.

7.3.13 If the Council decides to change our CTR scheme in 2018/19 to a banded discount scheme, we will need an additional module for the Civica OpenRevenues system. The indicative purchase price of the necessary software based on West Somerset Council's contribution to the shared cost would be £9,276 with additional on-going maintenance costs of £1,855.

7.3.14 However, an income banded assessment scheme for working age applicants will reduce the volume of changes in circumstances and thereby reduce the potential for further increased administration costs. The information held on a person's Universal Credit claim will be used to decide the income band they fall into and the amount of CTR they are entitled to. The DWP provides the Council with this information so a Universal Credit recipient will not need to make a separate claim for CTR. In the future, we expect data for Universal Credit recipients to be automatically populated into our CTR processing software, and so reduce the administrative burden.

7.4 Option 2 - Reduce maximum CTR offered to working age recipients from 80%

7.4.1 This means working age CTR recipients would need to pay more and the Council could reduce the funding required to support the scheme in 2018/19 to assist in off-setting cuts in the Local Government Finance Settlement. Under our current CTR scheme the minimum contribution is 20%. If we were to reduce the maximum CTR offered to working age recipients to 70%, it would mean everyone would have to pay at least the figures shown below.

Single Claimant					
Band	Annual Council Tax (after sole occupier discount)	Current minimum contribution 2017/18	Minimum proposed Annual Contribution	Current minimum weekly contribution 2017/18	Minimum proposed weekly Contribution
A	£804.62	£160.92	£241.39	£3.09	£4.63
B	£938.73	£187.75	£281.62	£3.60	£5.40
C	£1,072.83	£214.57	£321.85	£4.11	£6.17
D	£1,206.94	£348.67	£455.96	£6.69	£8.74
E	£1,475.15	£616.89	£724.17	£11.83	£13.89
F	£1,743.37	£885.10	£992.39	£16.97	£19.03
G	£2,011.57	£1,153.30	£1,260.59	£22.12	£24.18
H	£2,413.88	£1,555.62	£1,662.90	£29.83	£31.89

Table 7.4.1.1.

Claimant Couple					
Band	Annual Council Tax	Current minimum contribution 2017/18	Minimum proposed Annual Contribution	Current minimum weekly contribution 2017/18	Minimum proposed weekly Contribution
A	£1,072.83	£214.57	£321.85	£4.11	£6.17
B	£1,251.64	£250.33	£375.49	£4.80	£7.20
C	£1,430.44	£286.09	£429.13	£5.49	£8.23
D	£1,609.25	£464.90	£607.94	£8.92	£11.66
E	£1,966.87	£822.52	£965.56	£15.77	£18.52
F	£2,324.49	£1,180.14	£1,323.18	£22.63	£25.38
G	£2,682.09	£1,537.74	£1,680.78	£29.49	£32.23
H	£3,218.51	£2,074.16	£2,217.20	£39.78	£42.52

Table 7.4.1.2.

7.4.2 Increasing the contribution rate to 30% adds £2.74 a week additional Council Tax burden for a working age couple on CTR living in a band C (or above) property. It is important to consider the impact of increasing the Council Tax burden for those residents who are also likely to be impacted by wider Welfare Reform. Alternative reductions in the maximum CTR offered could be considered, for example, the maximum support provided through CTR could be any value less than 80% of the liability. Nationally, the maximum contribution required is 45%.

7.4.3 The saving from reducing the maximum CTR offered to working age recipients to 70% is estimated at £127,301. As any savings will be shared between the precepting authorities, West Somerset Council's share is estimated at £12,055. See [Appendix 2, Forecast M](#).

7.4.4 Increasing the contribution rate is likely to lead to increased administration costs in recovering the Council Tax owed. It is unknown that if contributions increase, whether residents who have paid and been able to pay, will be forced into greater indebtedness, and non-collection rates increase. However, increasing the burden to taxpayers can mean the debt is never repaid in a timely manner.

7.4.5 For those taxpayers in receipt of a passported benefit (Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, or Employment Support Allowance) deductions can be made from their benefit at source. The maximum the DWP can deduct is £3.70 a week. For 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16, there are 66 instructions outstanding with the DWP to apply deductions from benefits at source. The debt awaiting deduction is £13,332.83, with a further £8,821.90 queued to be collected once a previous year's order has been paid. For 2016/17, there are 5 instructions outstanding with the DWP to apply deductions. The value of debt awaiting deduction is £780.34, with a further £358.26 queued for collection once a previous year's order has been paid. Therefore, with an increasing debt burden, the Council Tax is never paid at a rate fast enough.

7.5 Option 3 - Introduce entitlement limits

7.5.1 There are two types of entitlement limits - minimum and maximum.

- A minimum limit is where there is no entitlement below a certain level. An example is shown below:

Mr Jones is entitled to CTR of £4 a week. Under this option a minimum entitlement of £5 a week is set. This would mean Mr Jones would lose his entitlement to CTR.

The advantage in setting a minimum weekly level at which we would award CTR is that this will avoid collecting small balances from customers and will focus limited resources towards the most needy.

- A maximum limit is where entitlement is capped at a certain level. The effect of this is illustrated in the example below.

Miss Smith is entitled to CTR of £25 a week. Under this option a maximum entitlement of £20 a week is set. This would mean Miss Smith's entitlement to CTR would be restricted to £20 a week.

7.5.2 The table below shows the weekly award range under our current CTR scheme based on 1,251 working age recipients.

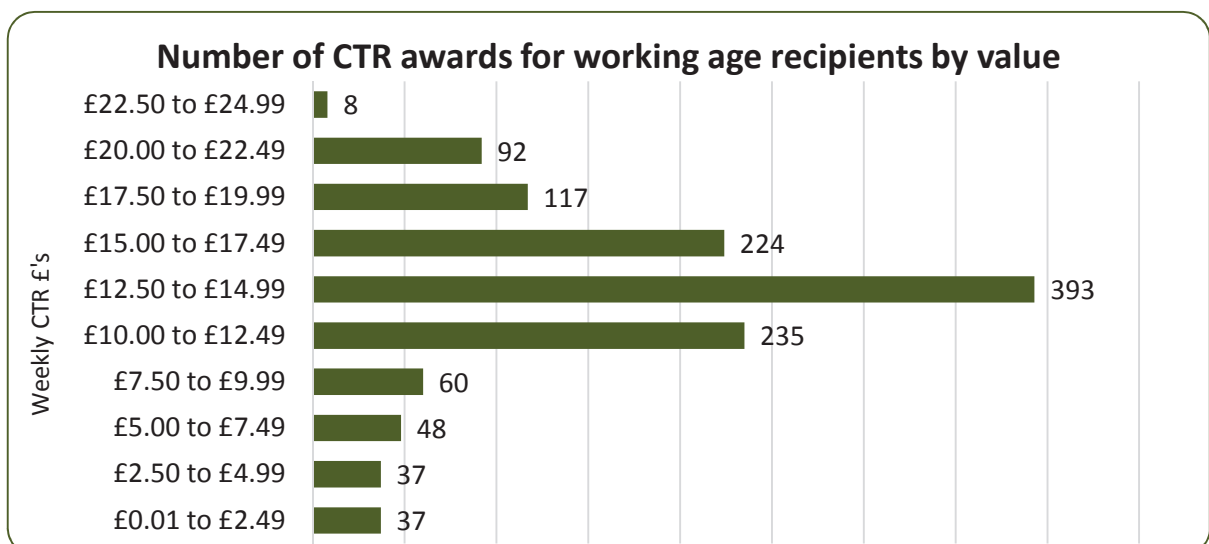


Chart 7.4.2.1.

7.5.3 Vulnerable groups could have some protection from the imposition of entitlement limits. Although adding to the complexity of the scheme, such protection could assist in mitigating the effects of reducing entitlement and thereby show due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

7.5.4 The table below illustrates the weekly CTR award range under our current scheme for:

- Families with children
- CTR recipients with caring responsibilities
- CTR recipients with a disability premium

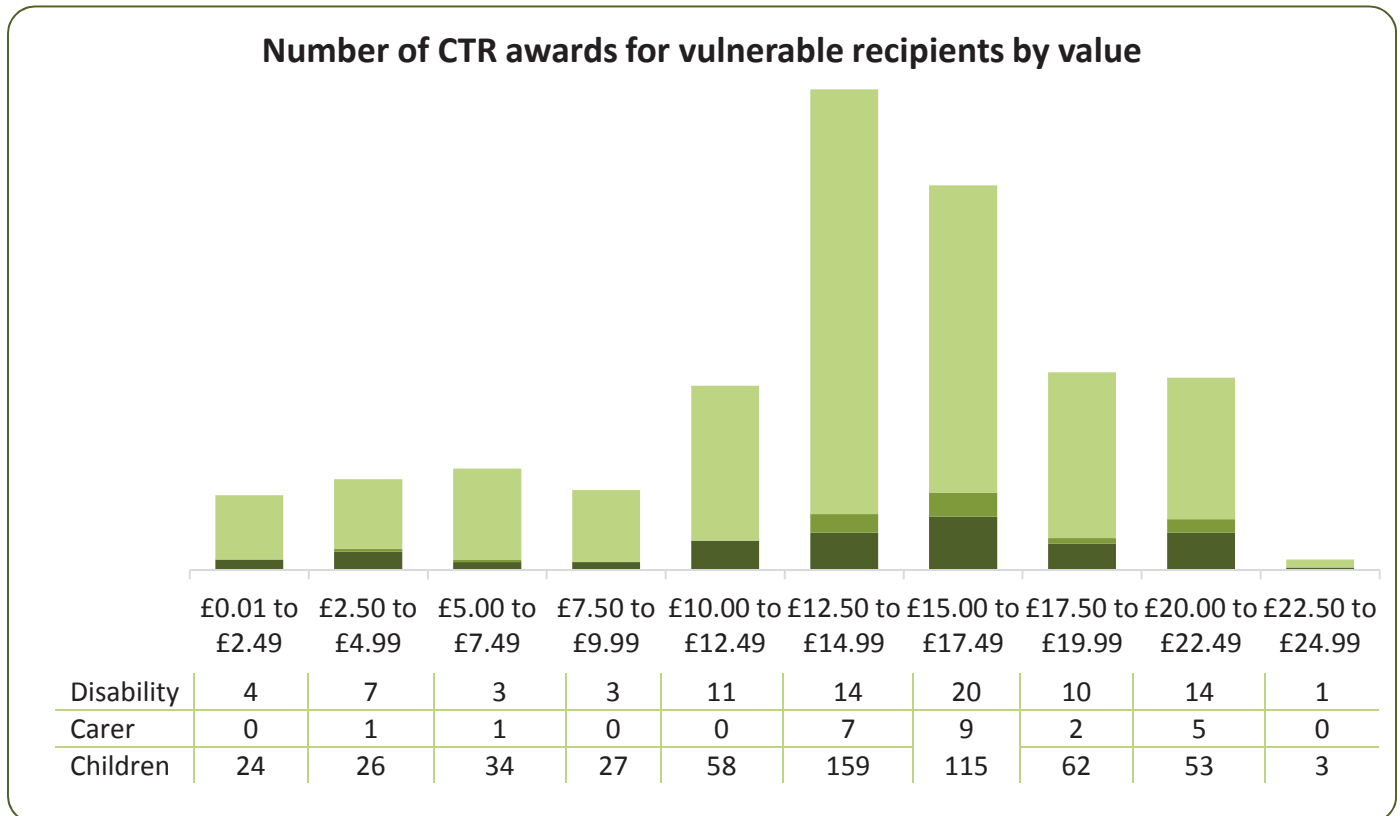


Chart 7.4.4.1.

7.5.5 Modelling has been conducted to indicate the maximum projected savings by introducing a minimum entitlement limit of £5 a week combined with a maximum entitlement limit of £15 a week across all CTR recipients. In consideration of any potential mitigation the Council may choose to apply, the reduction to that saving by protecting vulnerable groups is also shown in the table below.

Options	% working age CTR affected	Saving	Number affected	Vulnerable groups			
				Children	Carer	Disability	% of vulnerable groups affected
Min cap £2.50	2%	£2,628	28	24	0	4	£2,018
Min cap £5.00	6%	£9,848	74	50	1	11	£8,629
Max cap £15.00	35%	£75,422	441	233	16	45	£51,202
Max cap £20.00	8%	£34,304	100	56	5	15	£25,367
Min cap £5.00 and Max cap £15.00	41%	£85,270	515	283	17	56	£59,832

Table 7.4.5.1.

- 7.5.6 The maximum saving by introducing a minimum entitlement limit of £5 a week combined with a maximum entitlement limit of £15 a week across all CTR recipients is estimated at £85,270, see [Appendix 2, Forecast S](#). This would reduce to £25,438 if protection is applied to all vulnerable groups. It would affect 1,269 working age CTR recipients, including 515 recipients that fall within vulnerable groups. As any savings will be shared between the precepting authorities, West Somerset Council's share is estimated at £8,075 (or £2,409 if protection is applied).
- 7.5.7 The Council could decide to set alternative maximum or minimum entitlement limits for single people and couples as under our current CTR scheme, by restricting the maximum support available to 80% of Council Tax due for a Band C property, we already have a maximum entitlement limit of £21.95 for a couple or £16.46 for a single claimant. Based on Council Tax payable in 2017/18, introducing a maximum entitlement limit of £20 would mean that single applicants would be unaffected. However, couples living in properties valued at Band C or higher would receive less CTR.

8 Key considerations applicable to all options

- 8.1 Any of the options to reduce the level of support we offer through CTR will have an adverse impact on certain applicants or groups of applicants. If we need to cut the support offered through our CTR scheme, we need to consider a careful selection of options for our particular demographic unless additional funding can be raised through other Council initiatives or by cuts in services generally. The reality is that any revised scheme that has less funding, needs to establish which applicants are more able to pay an increased level of Council Tax with the reduction in their CTR.
- 8.2 The estimated financial impact of each of the options and the numbers of customers affected have been considered are set out in detail in [Appendix 2](#).
- 8.3 Although the Council is not legally required to include transitional protection for claimants moving from one CTR scheme to a replacement scheme, the legislation does state that Members must consider if transitional arrangements may be needed and if protection should apply to all groups or just certain groups. Such protection could limit our ability to realise savings.
- 8.4 Should there be any shift in proportions between working age and pension age or an economic downturn resulting in more people relying on some form of state financial support, there would be greater pressure on remaining Council Taxpayers to meet potentially higher outlay.
- 8.5 A decision to reduce CTR for people of working age will mean that Council Tax Collection will be a much harder task. This will result in more pressure on Revenues staff and may require additional capacity to maintain tax collection rates.

9 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

- 9.1 Council Tax Rebate is most closely linked with the financial performance of the Council, underpinning the delivery of corporate priorities and therefore all Corporate Aims.

10 Finance / Resource Implications

- 10.1 As reported earlier in this report, funding for CTR was reduced by 10% in 2013/14. Subsequently the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) has reduced by 38.7% in cash terms in the four years up to 2017/18.

- 10.2 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the Council, as reported to the Cabinet on 21 July 2017, shows we have a projected budget gap of £131k in 2018/19, rising to over £449k by 2022/23 if no action is taken to address the financial position. This takes into account projected cost pressures based on current service provision, and further reductions in funding from Government. It is clear that Members will need to consider a number of potential options to reduce costs / increase income to close this gap.
- 10.3 The Council has been required to make significant financial savings in recent years, and faces further cuts in funding and increasing financial risks over the coming years. It is becoming increasingly difficult to preserve core services to local residents.
- 10.4 Reducing Council Tax income will increase the Council's budget gap (and increase budget pressures for major preceptors) increasing the challenge for Members in identifying savings required to balance the budget overall.
- 10.5 The maximum saving that may be achieved in isolation is through Option 2 ([Appendix 2, Forecast M](#)). The illustrative budgetary savings for each preceptor through reducing maximum CTR for people of working age to 70% is shown below.

Authority	% CTR budget	CTR Budget for 2017/18	Estimated budget saving
WSC	9.47%	£248,982	£12,055
Parishes	4.27%	£112,395	£5,436
Somerset County Council	69.90%	£1,838,582	£88,983
Avon and Somerset Police	11.30%	£297,187	£14,385
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue	5.07%	£133,334	£6,454
Total	100%	£2,630,480	£127,301

Table 10.5.1.

- 10.6 By running the scheme as a “discount” we share the risk of financing the costs with the other precepting authorities through the Tax base calculation. The first financial impact is on the Collection Fund that is used to manage all Council Tax income, before that funding is shared between the various local precepting bodies. Given WSC’s share of the Collection Fund (shown in the chart below) is only 9.47%, the major element of the risk falls on the other precepting local authorities.

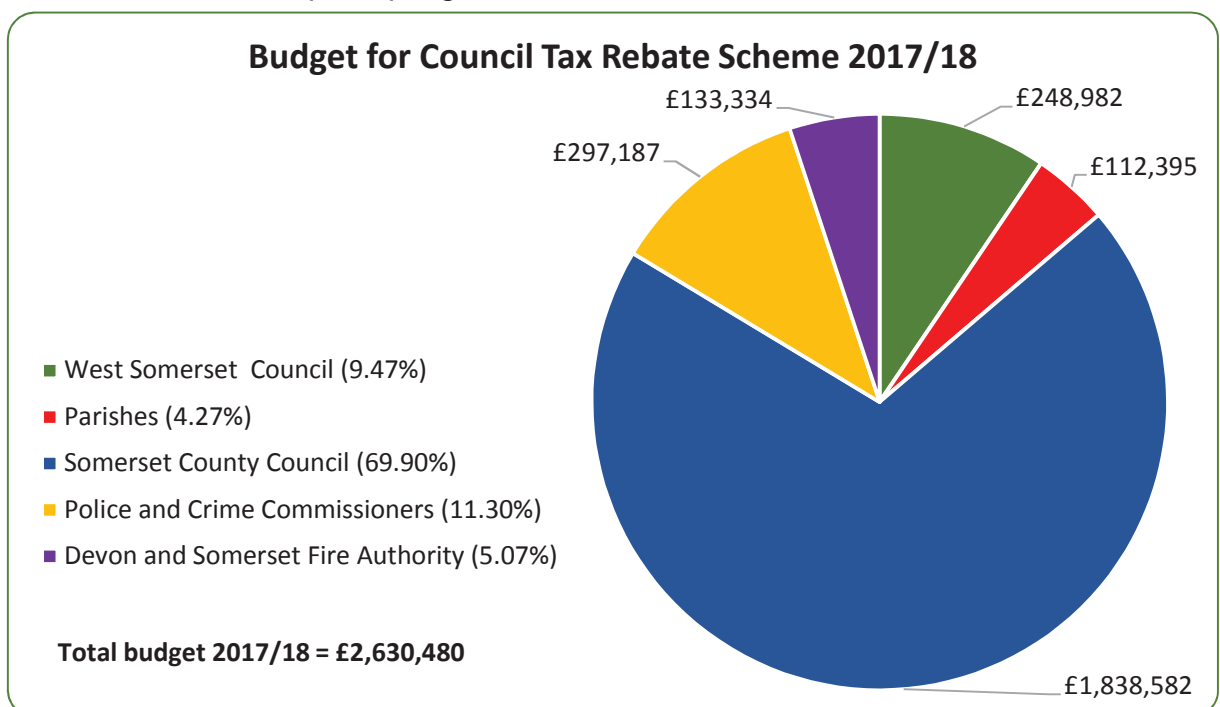


Chart 10.6.1

10.7 If the Council decide to change the CTR scheme for people of working age to a banded discount scheme, we will incur additional one-off costs of £29,374 in purchasing the necessary module to supplement our existing software, with on-going additional maintenance costs estimated at £5,875. This will be financed through existing budgets.

11 Legal Implications

11.1 Section 33 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and any replacement scheme is excluded from the scope of the Universal Credit system set up by Section 1 of that Act. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 (“the 2012 Act”) amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (“the 1992 Act”) to make provision for the localisation of Council Tax Rebate.

11.2 The 2012 Act amends the 1992 Act by adding a new section 13A to state that Council Tax will be reduced to the extent set out in an authority’s Council Tax reduction scheme and to such further extent as the authority sees fit (new s13A(1)(c) replicating the existing provision for authorities to adopt specified additional classes).

11.3 Local authorities must make a Council Tax reduction scheme setting out the reductions which are to apply in its area by persons or persons in classes consisting of persons whom the authority considers to be in financial need.

11.4 Paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as inserted by Schedule 4 to the Local Government Finance Act 2012, requires the authority to consider whether, for each financial year, the CTR scheme is to be revised or replaced. Where the scheme is to be revised or replaced the procedural requirements in paragraph 3 of that schedule apply. Any revision/replacement must be determined by 31st of January in the preceding year to the year which the changes are to apply.

11.5 The Council must therefore consider whether the scheme requires revision or replacement and if so, consult with precepting authorities (Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police, and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority), publish a draft scheme and then consult with such persons as are likely to have an interest in the operation of that scheme prior to determining the scheme before 31st January. If any proposed revision is to reduce or remove a reduction to which a class of person is entitled, the revision must include such transitional provision as the Council sees fit.

11.6 Case law has confirmed that consultation must

- be undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage;
- include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
- give consultees sufficient time to make a response; and
- be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.

12 Environmental Impact Implications

12.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

13 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

- 13.1 Safeguarding and community safety implications have been considered, and there are not expected to be any specific implications relating to this report.

14 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 14.1 Members need to demonstrate they have consciously thought about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of the decision making process. The three aims the authority must have due regard for:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- 14.2 The public sector equality duty, as set out in section 149 of the 2010 Equality Act, requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not share that protected characteristic.
- 14.3 The “protected characteristics” are: age, disability, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. Marriage and civil partnership are also a protected characteristic for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination.
- 14.4 The Council must pay due regard to any obvious risk of such discrimination arising from the decision before them. There is no prescribed manner in how the equality duty must be exercised, though producing an EIA is the most usual method. For this reason, these matters are examined in the EIA at [Appendix 3](#). In addition, debt levels are broken down by claim profile in [Appendix 4](#).
- 14.5 Councillors must consider the effect that implementing any changes to the CTR for 2018/19 will have on equality before making a decision. The EIA will assist with this. Where it is apparent the CTR policy would have an adverse effect on equality, then adjustments should be made to seek to reduce that effect and this is known as “mitigation”.
- 14.6 The Council has a duty to prevent child poverty under provisions within the Child Poverty Act 2010. In moving to a scheme based on bands of income, the scheme makes additional income provision for up to 2 children. Such a limit aligns to other Welfare Benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions. The calculation of a customer’s net income would continue to disregard certain income as set out in paragraphs 7.3.4. and 7.3.5. as well as disregarding qualifying childcare costs. However, where households have 3 or more children, the limitations on child numbers could have an adverse effect. Members could consider providing additional support to mitigate this effect. For example, in calculating CTR a disregard of £50 could be applied to net income for third and subsequent children under the age of 5 years old. Such a provision would recognise the potential limitations experienced by parents in increasing their income through employment as a result of caring for young children.

14.7 In mitigating the effects of any reduction to CTR for working age applicants, officers could apply a discretionary reduction in Council Tax liability through exceptional hardship as appropriate and in accordance with our policy

14.8 Budgetary pressures and economic and practical factors will also be relevant. The amount of weight to be placed on the same countervailing factors in the decision making process will be for Members to decide.

15 Social Value Implications

15.1 There are no social value implications associated with this report.

16 Partnership Implications

16.1 Further development of the Council Tax Rebate scheme will need collaborative working between WSC and the major precepting authorities.

17 Health and Wellbeing Implications

17.1 There are no Health and Wellbeing implications associated with this report.

18 Asset Management Implications

18.1 There are no asset management implications associated with this report.

19 Consultation Implications

19.1 Before implementing any change to the CTR scheme for 2018/19 we must consult with the public. It is important not just to consider the options to reduce funding for CTR, but also to give the public options on how we can keep our CTR scheme at the same level by making funding available from other sources or by reducing other services. The questions asked in public consultation are shown in [Appendix 1](#).

19.2 To obtain a confidence interval (CI) of 90% from public consultation, we need to receive 267 responses. The CI is a way of expressing how certain we are about the findings from our consultation, using statistics. It gives a range of results that is likely to include the “true” value for the population.

19.3 To obtain sufficient responses, officers contacted a proportional, random selection of households in each parish to obtain their views. As well as seeking views on our proposals from those selected for the random interviews, we also promoted responses through issuing a press release and publishing our consultation options on our website.

19.4 Public consultation ran for 8 weeks from 3 July 2017 to 27 August 2017. At the closing date, we had received 259 responses, thereby giving a confidence interval just under 90%, with responses from all parishes within the West Somerset district, with the exception of Oare, Exmoor and Clatworthy.

19.5 In addition, we also sought views on our proposals from the major preceptors, various welfare support agencies and advisory groups

20 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)

20.1 Not applicable

Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny Committee - Yes**
- **Cabinet - No**
- **Full Council - Yes**

Reporting Frequency: **Annually**

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix 1	Public Consultation
Appendix 2	Modelling of impact of options for CTR applicants and financial effect
Appendix 3	Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 4	Council Tax debt profile @ 31 March 2017

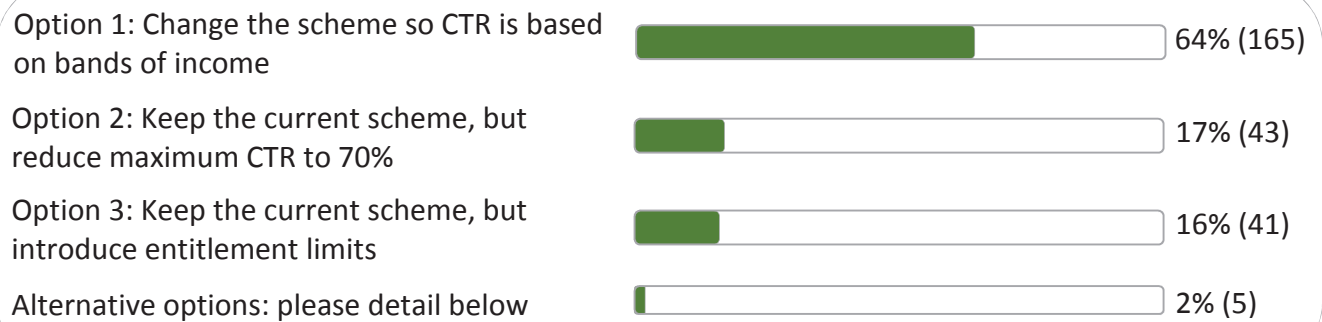
Contact Officers

Name	Heather Tiso
Direct Dial	01823 356541
Email	h.tiso@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Council Tax Rebate - Consultation for Changes in 2018/19

Question 1

How should Council Tax Rebate change for working age people?



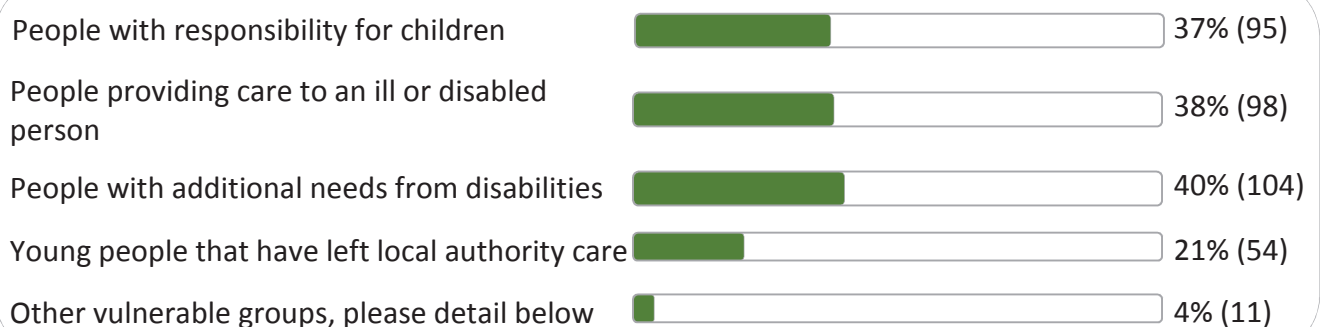
Question 2

Should the Council provide protection for some groups from any change to Council Tax Rebate from April 2018?



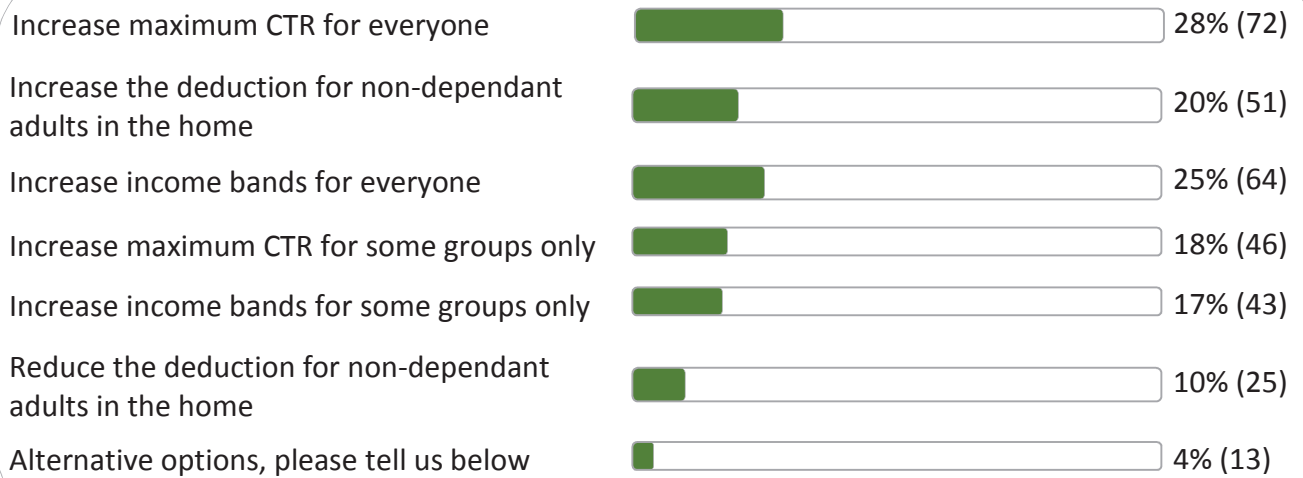
Question 3

If you think the Council should provide protection, which groups do you think should get this?



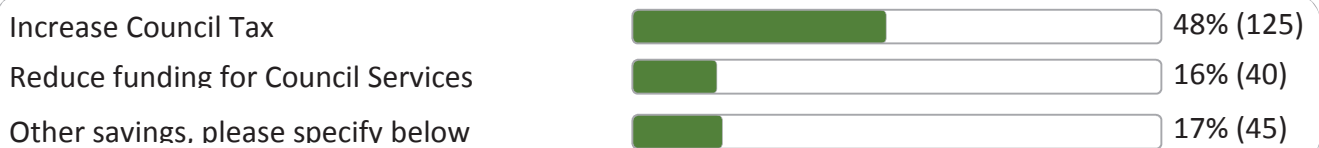
Question 4

If the Council decides to introduce an 'Income Band' scheme, which of the changes listed below do you think the Council should make?



Question 5

How do you think the Council should find savings to help pay for the Council Tax Rebate scheme from April 2018?



Are you a resident of West Somerset?



Do you pay Council Tax?



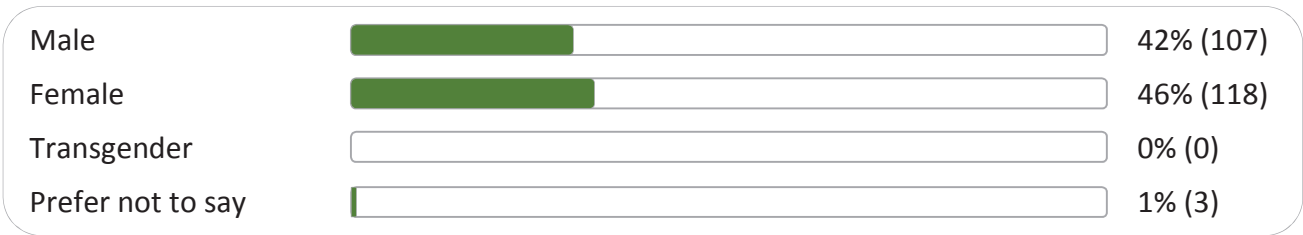
Do you currently receive Council Tax Rebate?



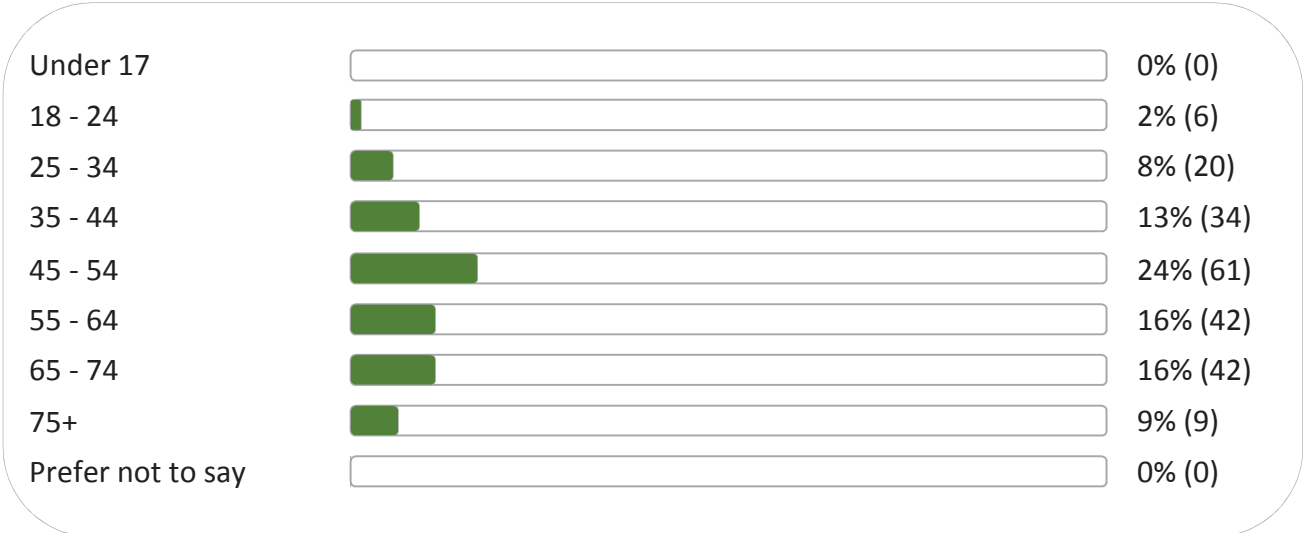
Do you work either full or part time?



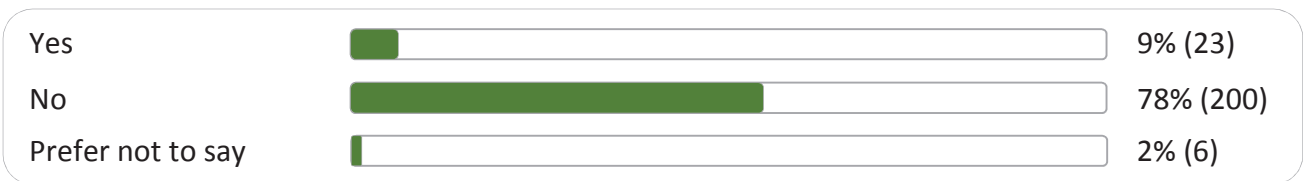
What is your gender?



What is your age group?



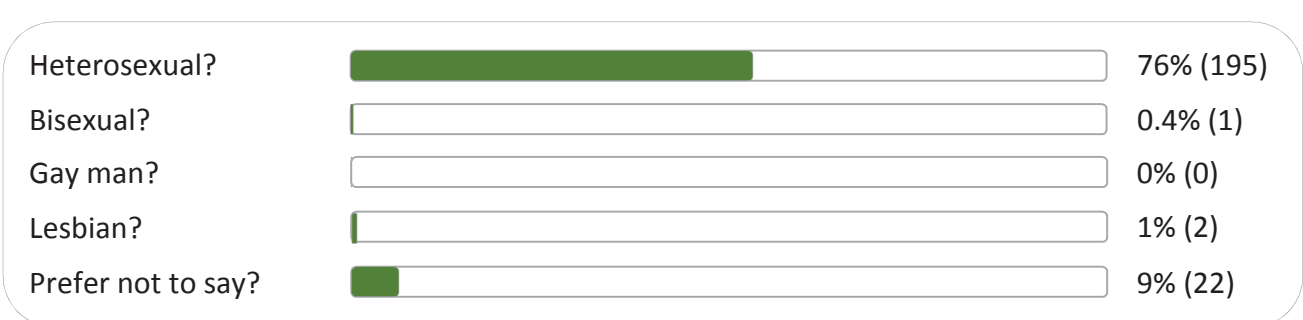
Do you consider yourself as having a disability or long-term physical or mental health condition?



Do you consider yourself to have a religion or belief?



Do you consider your sexual orientation to be?



Which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong to?



Question 1: Alternative Options

- 3: This would be accessible and applicable to those who need it most
- 5: This is a good idea - fair and simple
- 46: Happy
- 117: Council tax should be based on the value of the house
- 132: No council tax rebate - will encourage people to work/earn own money only rebate for lone parents with children under 3 + those with health conditions
- 228: All use the services so they should pay for them.
- 233: It is right that you protect people on low incomes, and people at a disadvantage. You must keep the system simple it was not simple reading the document. Do you really need to offer band 6 perhaps increase band 1 to 90% and remove band 6 altogether?
- 234: Happy with the present system.
- 236: Relate it to the bands - increase the costs for each band.
- 237: Should be no rebate I have to pay and I work so why should people who don't work get rebate it is unfair working people get no help.

Question 3: Other vulnerable groups (protection)

- 6: Anyone below poverty line
- 13: Unless options 2 or 3 are implemented in which case protection for all should be provided
- 21: People with long term health issues who struggle to work and maybe are on really low incomes as a result, but are really trying to make ends meet i.e. lupus fibromyalgia ME MS etc.
- 23: None of the above
- 43: For young children only
- 45: Elderly people on low incomes
- 46: Happy with present system feel it's working
- 49: Very young children only
- 53: Constant attendance incapacity benefit
- 64: For very young children only
- 83: Elderly
- 102: Young working families
- 207: Very young children only
- 230: No everybody gets the services so therefore they should pay for them.
- 234: The groups its already protects.
- 235: People in receipt of PIP payments or DLA.
- 236: Pension credit. (Don't agree) Anyone who is being supported to bring the income up.
- 237: Nobody unless caring for severely ill or disabled person.
- 258: Only for children pre-school age.

Question 4: If the Council decides to introduce an 'Income Band' scheme, which of the changes listed below do you think the Council should make - alternative options

- 8: People on lowest incomes should get maximum rebate
- 13: Implement as described. No further changes necessary
- 26: None of the above
- 79: Also take outgoings into account
- 97: Don't know
- 125: Any rebate should be equal across all bands
- 130: Not sure
- 147: I think £5 as mentioned in this booklet is too low for non-deps some could be on high wages
- 217: Don't know
- 228: Reduce the rebates
- 234: Keep the system the same.
- 235: I cannot answer this question without referring to the figures involved.
- 236: Not supporting the deduction for children. Tax codes should provide a guideline - maybe use this as a guide - HMRC linked.
- 237: No rebate for anyone should be more help for people who work.
- 258: Reduce maximum CTR Rebate to either 75% or 80% for everyone.

Question 5: How do you think the Council should find savings to help pay for the Council Tax Rebate scheme from April 2018? – Comments

- 6: Reduce no. of very highly paid staff within the council, e.g. anyone over 50k
- 12: Greatly increase council tax on 2nd homes especially not rented out locally and on empty property over 1 year
- 13: Admin savings first, by simplifying the current scheme and making it an income band scheme first. Council tax if this isn't sufficient
- 16: Increase council tax for the holiday homes
- 17: Reduce benefit paid to people get them into work
- 19: I don't mind paying extra but so should people on benefit too
- 38: Council reserves
- 39: Either way the tax payer loses out
- 40: I feel council tax is expensive enough. Find other options that don't tax hard working people harder
- 42: We pay enough already
- 43: If it a simple scheme savings can be made through this simpler system
- 45: Research more money how it's spent by people who earn the most could they afford to pay more
- 46: Leave well alone
- 47: Already paying too much
- 54: From staff savings
- 57: Stop wasting money on expensive booklets
- 65: Existing resources
- 66: Don't know
- 74: Stop changing council tax each month (saves on postage)
- 76: Increase council tax on second/holiday homes
- 114: From customer on benefit
- 126: Shared services with other councils Taunton Deane better use of available funds
- 131: Happy to pay extra if services are provided to make a difference
- 132: No rebate for people able to work will lower council tax for workers and increase spending ability for council services
- 134: Effective use of money in local and county council regarding staff and resources
- 136: Reduce benefit for all

- 138: What are the other options if there isn't any money
- 139: Don't know
- 141: People receiving council tax rebate could help run a local facility such as being on a rota system to help clean public toilets that are so often closed due to funding
- 145: why should the people that pay their full council tax bills be made to pay more to subsidise the non-payers
- 146: I am unsure how to provide savings to pay for relief but to reduce funding would be penalising people who already don't get rebate
- 147: I don't mind paying a bit more council tax but I think some services could be separated in a more efficient way to save money
- 148: Don't think tax payers should fund council tax rebate it's already a burden on the average working family. Put a cap on the rebate i.e. if people earn more than £300 per week they don't qualify
- 151: Don't know but I pay enough council tax already
- 152: Don't know
- 159: Unsure
- 160: Don't know
- 162: Get people to start working
- 163: Less benefits
- 166: Make them go to work
- 173: Wasted money on staff, internal savings through staff (wages etc.) (loss of swimming pool)
- 177: Reduce your chief execs pay
- 186: Reduce the rebate
- 193: Reduce the cost of using communities
- 202: Reduce waste. Cut councillors allowances
- 204: Don't mind a small increase
- 206: From trying to reduce the amount of council tax help paid out
- 207: Try and encourage people into work not reliant on benefits
- 209: Neither
- 227: Reduce all rebates.
- 230: Reduce printing costs - use black and white not full colour.
- 233: Definitely increase Council Tax. This has been held back for too long by ruling parties obsessed with low taxes. You cannot get something for nothing. Sensible increases to protect those at disadvantage is responsible. Base single person discount on incomes too.
- 234: Leave well alone.
- 235: This again would refer to the figures involved - however all conduits should be value for money more tenders sought for each contract.
- 236: Simplest way - causes most reaction. If the Council can explain fully what e.g. an extra £1 is ring-fenced for e.g. roads, people would more accepting.
- 237: No increase I pay enough as it is, rebate wouldn't affect me as I work and not on benefits people on benefits get enough help.
- 248: More regular checking of benefit claims and CT discounts
- 256: Reduce funding for Council services but only linked to efficiency.
- 257: Resident reporting of street light/signage issues. Ask residents to maintain verges near their homes etc. - maybe encourage use as veg plots etc. Don't send letters chasing payments for less than the cost in postage and admin of chasing the payment.

Please tell us about any impact that you think these changes could have on you or the services you receive from the Council.

- 6: I may have to pay a small percentage more but I don't mind helping others more in need
- 11: With reduced funding available for council services any efficiency savings have to be from less chiefs and more Indians. Management structures have to be streamlined
- 13: It would be an easier to understand scheme, making life easier for our tenants. More of our tenants would see an increase in their rebate entitlement, which helps them plan their finances and manage their lives
- 14: I believe that a moderate increase in council tax coupled with a maximum rebate of 70% would be fairest and would ultimately benefit the majority of the community. I also think that certain groups should be protected from the reduction of the rebate
- 15: They should not have too much of an impact. I am a 55-year-old widow bringing up two children (step granddaughters) who I have guardianship of. I can only work part time till they are older. It should depend on circumstances
- 16: As a local landlord trying to provide affordable accommodation it is a difficult balance increasing council tax as many tenants are on benefit or low incomes
- 20: There are certain members of society that do need extra support and I am willing to pay however I think that limits need to be made on what can be claimed for (long term unemployed)
- 21: The income bands sound a much more sensible way of assessing eligibility and might lead to less problems and paperwork when people's income fluctuates a small amount. This would make it much easier to budget and work towards independence from needing support.
- 23: Not sure I get many
- 24: Don't know
- 25: None, not on any working age benefits
- 27: No impact
- 30: We already pay enough
- 31: Reduction of quality of life due to an increase of cost of living for families on low working incomes
- 38: An increase would cause greater financial struggle
- 40: It will put council tax up as I have no children or dependants, not sure the increase is needed
- 44: None
- 45: Worried refuse collections being reduced. Road maintenance not being adequate. Council merger how would they cover all services as the costs of everything they have to maintain rise
- 48: We do not want to lose any more service
- 52: I will pay a little more council tax over and above any other rise
- 70: None
- 74: None
- 77: Refuse collection ours would impact hugely
- 78: N/A as state pension age. Council services such as refuse cuts etc. would impact negatively though
- 80: For me an increase in council tax. The council should continually monitor those who are eligible for rebate. The council should look to increase productivity in their council services
- 83: Can't see how it would affect my family at all
- 85: None
- 87: We will get a slight increase in our council tax bill
- 100: None
- 101: I think everyone could contribute a little more, so what services can be maintained, rather than cut further. Council tax bills have risen very little in recent years
- 125: This scheme will have no effect on our way of living as we claim no benefits and never have. We live and work within our means and expect nothing in return
- 129: None, we don't qualify for a rebate. As long as council services remain, we wouldn't object to a small rise in council tax
- 131: Improved services
- 132: Reduce my bill
- 134: Cuts to education. Reduction in library services

- 141: As I do not receive any rebate these changes won't affect me. Overall, I do not wish the council to lose revenue as I am very concerned that there is a lack of funds for local public services that everyone would benefit from
- 145: The people that work will always suffer, we make it too easy for people not to work and therefore become a financial drain on society people who claim benefit should put something back into the local community i.e. grass cutting litter picking etc.
- 146: We are not high earners but do not receive council tax rebate. Increases in council tax would affect us as we already have to spread our payments over 12 months due to tight finances. We aren't getting any different/better services and yet would pay more
- 147: I don't believe that it is fair that other services should be impacted just to provide funding for benefits. Generally, people are ok in paying a little bit more for services as long as the service is still provided in a good standard
- 150: Hopefully not too many changes if c/tax increase
- 155: None, I work
- 164: I won't be able to afford my bill
- 218: As long as Council Tax is not increased to fund any change, the changes will not affect me.
- 229: Don't understand it now so no hope for the future.
- 233: Happy to pay an extra 1 or 2% council tax to cover shortfall.
- 235: None
- 236: More clarity on what the Council Tax is spent on. People are more likely to agree to/give/spend more on Council Tax. Choice to add to - ring-fenced. Like to see more quality control of work done. Cheap work sometimes means cheap work. Take into account more than price at tender.
- 237: No change as Council are cutting back on all services and this consultation is another way to cut services and tax working people to pay for people on benefits.
- 238: There are a lot of well off retired people who receive benefit which is not needed. Look after the youngsters first and try somehow to place priority to local people first rather than those who see us as an "easy touch".
- 243: No impact on myself
- 249: Council services are cut to the bone already, if council tax increase is necessary then so be it
- 254: Since my husband's death in 2006 I have been given a 25% Single Person Discount and it seems unlikely that any changes would have much impact on my Council Tax bill.
- 255: If the Council Tax had been increased gradually there would have been less impact and fewer cutbacks.
- 256: If done properly the effect should be minimal.
- 257: Having worked at Southend on sea Borough Council I understand the difficult circumstances Somerset Council is facing with a continuation of cuts to Government funding. As a healthy, working individual I am less concerned about the impact on myself and more concerned that those members of our society already under pressure are protected and helped.
- 258: Council Tax bills area already hard to pay for most people and for those of us who don't get any help it seems unfair to continue to support those not in work. Everyone should make a contribution regardless of their income and circumstances.

If you have any further comments or suggestions to make on the Council Tax Rebate Scheme please tell us

- 6: I really think the council need to take a stronger ethical stand against austerity, which seems set to continue if the government have their way. Please consider the severe, damaging impact on people's lives of yet further cuts to services, particularly social care, domestic abuse shelters, people with disabilities & vulnerable people, homelessness, increasing youth counselling. If you need to save money please consider having fewer highly paid staff at the council which might help employ more social workers who are desperately trying to pick up the pieces of effects on families of years of austerity.
- 20: And perhaps more rewards given for people trying to establish themselves into work
- 21: I have had issues recently with old bills having charges added to them due to tax credits slow processing of information, however I think there should be an end of the year review system that takes into account wages throughout the entire financial year and averages these out more fairly. At the moment one higher month will mean that someone is not eligible and gets their claim stopped completely even if the other 11 months were lower and eligible. This causes a lot of confusion and stress. Plus for people on lowest incomes when they get extra hours this then screws things up with the council tax rebate and H/B meaning that those extra hours count for nothing.
- 46: Twice as much to be paid by immigrants as their right to abide in this country and have the same support. Buy up all disused properties turn into low paid properties for lower income families lots of wasted properties
- 89: As a lone parent myself I feel you should encourage these groups into work and help them come off benefits
- 100: You have an unenviable, nay, impossible task!!! There are many undeserving cases in this area. As Mr Meldrew would say "buy only that which you can afford". That would include smart phones, sky packages, cars etc.
- 101: I think there is a perception that individuals that receive a rebate could probably do without all or some of it. Still manage to afford luxuries, mobile phones new cars satellite tv etc. I personally feel the rebate is a little too generous
- 103: a small increase is reasonable
- 143: As a family with 3 young children we are struggling to pay the council tax and cannot claim any benefit as we are both in work
- 146: Savings should not be made to a cost at people not receiving rebate
- 148: This form is hard to complete for someone who knows nothing about benefits
- 149: This document does not provide a meaningful consultation. There is a large amount of detail to absorb, and the ability to use this to make judgements is a big ask. This consultation should have been simpler and concentrated more on basic principles, than so much detail- or more time to consider the information. A one day period is not sufficient
- 160: I can't afford my bill already so reducing benefit will make me worse off
- 190: Reduce everyone's council tax, too expensive as it is
- 210: Stop targeting vulnerable with cuts
- 213: I do not want to see council tax increased
- 218: I was unable to make sense of the e.g. of couple with no children. Payment under present scheme £969.67, payment under new scheme £750.98 so have to pay £213.79 more and not £108.16 as e.g. Having read this leaflet, I am amazed at complexity of present or any new system. Surely a simpler method could be devised. Perhaps it should be part of universal credit administered by government and not local authority.
- 231: Don't understand it.
- 233: Also, is there a need to continue offering 25% discount to single people regardless of their income? This needs looking at. How does the cost to the Council really differ between a 1 or 2 person household? Not much I guess. If someone can afford it they should pay. Maybe, the whole thing should be based on income bands full stop.

- 234: I believe immigrants should pay twice as much Council Tax to have the right to abide in this country and still have the same support. The Council should buy up all disused premises and turn these with low cost properties for lower income families as there are many wasted properties.
- 235: In principle, I would support any measures to streamline, simplify and speed up these payments.
- 236: Second homes e.g. empty homes = extra council tax. More involvement of people in people in local areas local consultation groups. More council houses right to build. Use nationally accepted standard HMRC tax codes to calculate. Use more local companies to do work more accountable for work they do. Provide tools for local communities to fix their own communities - Voluntary pride of area.
- 237: No point really this is just a scheme to save money and tax working people more to pay for the cuts you are making so you can help people on benefits.
- 238: Also find a means by which all those who have a "second home" down here are charged full and rate for the privilege of living here. There are far too many "escapees" from Council Tax by placing properties in dependents/non-domicile names, landlords particularly.
- 257: I would say as a maths graduate and teacher, this document was too wordy and numeric to be easily understood. Thank you for sending someone out to explain things, but please simplify for people, like me, who don't have time to talk to your representative but who still wish to engage in the consultation process.
- 258: Most customers who receive disability benefits have more money and should be able to afford to pay their Council Tax bills. Families with young children are the ones who most need the extra help.

Forecast A

No change to current Council Tax Rebate Scheme

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,251	2,910
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,294.55	£48,307.68
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.82	£16.60
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£901,787.09	£2,518,900.25
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£0.00
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£111,579.80

Working age customers	Number	Average award
Single, no children	577	£13.20
Couple no children	113	£17.35
Couple with children	197	£15.40
Lone parent with children	364	£12.86
Total	1,251	£13.82
Employed & self employed	328	£10.86
Applicants with a disability	87	£14.32
Applicants with caring responsibilities	25	£15.65

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast B

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% and there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,228	2,887
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,434.89	£48,357.02
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.12	£16.75
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£904,360.19	£2,521,473.35
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Additional cost			£2,573.10
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£109,006.70

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	490	£1.31	86	£3.10	1	£2.18
Couple	95	£1.67	18	£4.14	0	£0.00
Couple + children	109	£2.33	70	£5.39	18	£13.17
Lone parent	255	£1.83	105	£4.53	4	£9.71
Total	949	£1.60	279	£4.28	23	£12.09
Employed	176	£4.09	135	£4.14	17	£10.57
Disabled	25	£2.87	57	£3.79	5	£15.04
Carer	6	£1.91	17	£5.63	2	£15.16

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast C

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant and £50 income disregard for each child under 5 years old if there are more than 2 children in the household (under 5 protection for > 2 children).

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,236	2,895
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,537.21	£48,550.34
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.19	£16.77
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£914,440.37	£2,531,553.53
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Additional cost			£12,653.28
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£98,926.52

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	490	£1.31	86	£3.10	1	£2.18
Couple	95	£1.67	18	£4.14	0	£0.00
Couple + children	120	£2.40	66	£5.27	11	£14.95
Lone parent	256	£1.84	105	£4.18	3	£7.20
Total	961	£1.62	275	£4.10	15	£12.55
Employed	186	£4.06	132	£4.04	10	£10.71
Disabled	27	£2.74	57	£3.87	3	£17.55
Carer	7	£1.80	17	£5.90	1	£17.79

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast D

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant carers allowance is disregarded from income calculation

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,229	2,888
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,431.43	£48,444.56
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.18	£16.77
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£908,924.82	£2,526,037.98
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Additional cost			£7,137.73
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£104,442.07

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	491	£1.32	85	£3.13	1	£2.18
Couple	99	£1.65	14	£3.34	0	£0.00
Couple + children	110	£2.31	70	£5.18	17	£13.20
Lone parent	256	£1.86	104	£4.45	4	£9.71
Total	956	£1.61	273	£4.17	22	£12.06
Employed	177	£4.12	135	£4.03	16	£10.44
Disabled	29	£2.76	54	£3.04	4	£15.64
Carer	13	£2.34	11	£3.62	1	£17.65

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast E

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant, £50 income disregard for each child under 5 years old if there are more than 2 children in the household (under 5 protection for > 2 children) and carers' allowance is disregarded from income calculation.

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,237	2,896
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,624.69	£48,637.82
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.25	£16.79
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£919,001.95	£2,536,115.11
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Additional cost			£17,214.86
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£94,364.94

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	491	£1.32	85	£3.13	1	£2.18
Couple	99	£1.65	14	£3.34	0	£0.00
Couple + children	121	£2.39	66	£5.05	10	£15.18
Lone parent	257	£1.87	104	£4.10	3	£7.20
Total	968	£1.63	269	£3.99	14	£12.54
Employed	187	£4.09	132	£3.90	9	£10.50
Disabled	31	£2.66	54	£3.13	2	£19.99
Carer	14	£2.26	11	£4.04	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast F

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% and there is no deduction for any non-dependant

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,230	2,889
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,659.60	£48,672.73
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.36	£16.85
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£920,821.89	£2,537,935.05
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Additional cost			£19,034.80
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£92,545.00

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	494	£1.55	83	£3.02	0	£0.00
Couple	97	£2.02	16	£3.56	0	£0.00
Couple + children	109	£2.42	70	£5.39	18	£13.17
Lone parent	257	£2.18	104	£4.46	3	£11.21
Total	957	£1.86	273	£4.21	21	£12.89
Employed	177	£4.26	135	£4.00	16	£10.90
Disabled	25	£2.87	57	£3.79	5	£15.04
Carer	6	£1.91	17	£5.63	2	£15.16

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast G

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant, minimum CTR is £5 a week and maximum CTR is £15 a week.

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,200	2,859
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£15,682.34	£46,695.47
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.07	£16.33
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£817,722.22	£2,434,835.38
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£84,064.87
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£195,644.67

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	398	£1.24	177	£2.95	2	£7.31
Couple	13	£3.95	98	£4.15	2	£7.28
Couple + children	31	£5.02	135	£4.89	31	£11.82
Lone parent	192	£1.90	156	£3.40	16	£10.16
Total	634	£1.68	566	£3.74	51	£10.95
Employed	146	£4.58	144	£4.20	38	£8.97
Disabled	16	£3.84	62	£4.12	9	£11.71
Carer	4	£1.89	19	£5.51	2	£15.16

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast H

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 85% there is no deduction for any non-dependant, minimum CTR is £5 a week and maximum CTR is £15 a week.

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,203	2,862
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£15,812.45	£46,825.58
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.14	£16.36
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£824,506.31	£2,441,619.47
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£77,280.78
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£188,860.58

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	402	£1.30	174	£2.91	1	£12.43
Couple	13	£4.22	99	£4.04	1	£3.65
Couple + children	31	£5.02	135	£4.89	31	£11.82
Lone parent	193	£2.12	156	£3.37	15	£9.98
Total	639	£1.79	564	£3.71	48	£11.09
Employed	147	£4.67	145	£4.14	36	£8.81
Disabled	16	£3.84	62	£4.12	9	£11.71
Carer	4	£1.89	19	£5.51	2	£15.16

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast I

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 80% and there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,228	2,887
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£16,252.08	£47,265.21
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.23	£16.37
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£847,430.06	£2,464,543.22
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£54,357.03
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£165,936.83

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	283	£0.76	293	£1.18	1	£2.18
Couple	57	£0.89	56	£1.72	0	£0.00
Couple + children	85	£1.74	94	£4.53	18	£13.17
Lone parent	145	£1.62	215	£2.54	4	£9.71
Total	570	£1.14	658	£2.15	23	£12.09
Employed	147	£3.94	164	£4.02	17	£10.57
Disabled	20	£2.95	62	£4.35	5	£15.04
Carer	5	£1.24	18	£6.17	2	£15.16

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast J

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 80% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant and £50 income disregard for each child under 5 years old if there are more than 2 children in the household (under 5 protection for > 2 children).

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,236	2,895
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£16,426.46	£47,439.59
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.29	£16.39
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£856,522.66	£2,473,635.82
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£45,264.43
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£5,605,370.03
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£156,844.23

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	283	£0.76	293	£1.18	1	£2.18
Couple	57	£0.89	56	£1.72	0	£0.00
Couple + children	93	£1.83	93	£4.26	11	£14.95
Lone parent	146	£1.62	215	£2.39	3	£7.20
Total	579	£1.16	657	£2.06	15	£12.55
Employed	154	£3.91	164	£3.86	10	£10.71
Disabled	22	£2.68	62	£4.35	3	£17.55
Carer	6	£1.03	18	£6.31	1	£17.79

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast K

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 80% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant carers allowance is disregarded from income calculation

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,229	2,888
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£16,335.19	£47,348.32
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.29	£16.39
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£851,763.64	£2,468,876.80
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£50,023.45
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£161,603.25

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	284	£0.77	292	£1.18	1	£2.18
Couple	60	£0.86	53	£1.21	0	£0.00
Couple + children	85	£1.74	95	£4.35	17	£13.20
Lone parent	146	£1.65	214	£2.49	4	£9.71
Total	575	£1.15	654	£2.07	22	£12.06
Employed	147	£3.99	165	£3.92	16	£10.44
Disabled	23	£2.70	60	£3.62	4	£15.64
Carer	10	£1.72	14	£3.69	1	£17.65

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast L

Change CTR so entitlement is based on bands of income, where maximum CTR is 80% there is a flat rate deduction of £5 for each non-dependant, £50 income disregard for each child under 5 years old if there are more than 2 children in the household (under 5 protection for > 2 children) and carers' allowance is disregarded from income calculation.

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,237	2,896
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£16,508.40	£47,521.53
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.35	£16.41
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£860,795.15	£2,477,908.31
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£40,991.94
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£152,571.74

Working Age Customers	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	283	£0.77	292	£1.18	1	£2.18
Couple	57	£0.91	53	£1.21	0	£0.00
Couple + children	93	£1.83	94	£4.10	10	£15.18
Lone parent	146	£1.67	214	£2.34	3	£7.20
Total	579	£1.18	653	£1.98	14	£12.54
Employed	154	£3.96	165	£3.74	9	£10.50
Disabled	25	£2.48	60	£3.64	2	£19.99
Carer	11	£1.57	14	£3.95	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast M

Retain existing CTR scheme, but reduce maximum CTR to 70%

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,220	2,879
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£14,853.15	£45,866.28
Average weekly award	£18.69	£12.17	£15.93
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£774,485.68	£2,391,598.84
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£127,301.41
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£238,881.21

Working Age Customers	Number reduced	Average weekly decrease	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	567	£1.76	10	£1.01
Couple	113	£2.38	0	£0.00
Couple + children	185	£2.46	12	£1.39
Lone parent	355	£1.92	9	£0.97
Total	1,220	£1.97	31	£1.15
Employed	328	£2.08	0	£0.00
Disabled	87	£2.17	0	£0.00
Carer	25	£2.28	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast N

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £2.50 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,214	2,873
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,244.14	£48,257.27
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.20	£16.80
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£899,158.90	£2,516,272.06
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£2,628.19
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£114,207.99

Working Age Customers	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	13	£1.27
Couple	0	£0.00
Couple + children	12	£1.39
Lone parent	12	£1.44
Total	37	£1.36
Employed	35	£1.35
Disabled	4	£1.19
Carer	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast O

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £5.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,177	2,836
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,105.68	£48,118.81
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.53	£16.97
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£891,938.86	£2,509,052.02
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£9,848.23
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£121,428.03

Working Age Customers	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	21	£2.07
Couple	3	£3.63
Couple + children	23	£2.28
Lone parent	27	£3.04
Total	74	£2.55
Employed	71	£2.57
Disabled	11	£2.54
Carer	1	£3.18

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast P

Retain existing scheme, but set maximum CTR at £15.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,251	2,910
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£15,848.10	£46,861.23
Average weekly award	£18.69	£12.67	£16.10
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£826,365.44	£2,443,478.60
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£75,421.65
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£187,001.45

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss
Single	114	£2.65
Couple	94	£3.95
Couple + children	134	£4.27
Lone parent	99	£2.02
Total	441	£3.28
Employed	93	£3.40
Disabled	45	£3.58
Carer	16	£3.01

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast Q

Retain existing scheme, but set maximum CTR at £20.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,251	2,910
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,139.79	£48,152.92
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.70	£16.55
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£893,717.66	£2,510,830.82
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£8,069.43
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£119,649.23

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss
Single	17	£1.55
Couple	27	£1.71
Couple + children	44	£1.58
Lone parent	12	£1.05
Total	100	£1.55
Employed	24	£1.39
Disabled	15	£1.19
Carer	5	£0.98

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast R

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £2.50 a week and maximum CTR at £20.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,214	2,873
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£17,089.39	£48,102.52
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.08	£16.74
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£891,089.47	£2,508,202.63
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£10,697.62
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£122,277.42

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	17	£1.55	13	£1.27
Couple	27	£1.71	0	£0.00
Couple + children	44	£1.58	12	£1.39
Lone parent	12	£1.05	12	£1.44
Total	100	£1.55	37	£1.36
Employed	24	£1.39	35	£1.35
Disabled	15	£1.19	4	£1.19
Carer	5	£0.98	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast S

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £5.00 a week and maximum CTR at £15.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,177	2,836
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£15,659.23	£46,672.36
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.30	£16.46
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£816,517.21	£2,433,630.37
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£85,269.88
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£196,849.68

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	114	£2.65	21	£2.07
Couple	94	£3.95	3	£3.63
Couple + children	134	£4.27	23	£2.28
Lone parent	99	£2.02	27	£3.04
Total	441	£3.28	74	£2.55
Employed	93	£3.40	71	£2.57
Disabled	45	£3.58	11	£2.54
Carer	16	£3.01	1	£3.18

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast T

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £2.50 a week and maximum CTR at £15.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,214	2,873
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£15,797.70	£46,810.83
Average weekly award	£18.69	£13.01	£16.29
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£823,737.25	£2,440,850.41
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£78,049.84
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£189,629.64

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	114	£2.65	13	£1.27
Couple	94	£3.95	0	£0.00
Couple + children	134	£4.27	12	£1.39
Lone parent	99	£2.02	12	£1.44
Total	441	£3.28	37	£1.36
Employed	93	£3.40	35	£1.35
Disabled	45	£3.58	4	£1.19
Carer	16	£3.01	0	£0.00

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Forecast U

Retain existing scheme, but set minimum CTR at £5.00 a week and maximum CTR at £20.00 a week

	Pension Age	Working age	Total
Number of claims	1,659	1,177	2,836
Total weekly awards	£31,013.13	£16,950.92	£47,964.05
Average weekly award	£18.69	£14.40	£16.91
Estimated 2018/19 awards	£1,617,113.16	£883,869.43	£2,500,982.59
Estimated expenditure 2017/18			£2,518,900.25
Saving			£17,917.66
* Notional Budget 2017/18			£2,630,480.05
Estimated underspend in 2018/19 compared to *notional budget for 2017/18			£129,497.46

Working Age Customers	Number with reduced entitlement	Average weekly loss	Number no longer qualifying	Average weekly loss
Single	17	£1.55	21	£2.07
Couple	27	£1.71	3	£3.63
Couple + children	44	£1.58	23	£2.28
Lone parent	12	£1.05	27	£3.04
Total	100	£1.55	74	£2.55
Employed	24	£1.39	71	£2.57
Disabled	15	£1.19	11	£2.54
Carer	5	£0.98	1	£3.18

* Notional budget calculated in accordance with initial distribution of funding for CTR in 2013/14

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Number of claims with reduced entitlement

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	86	86	85	85	83	177	174	293	293	292
Couple, no children	18	18	14	14	16	98	99	56	56	53
Couple with children	70	66	70	66	70	135	135	94	93	95
Lone parent with children	105	105	104	104	104	156	156	215	215	214
Total claims reduced	279	275	273	269	273	566	564	658	657	654
Employed & self employed	135	132	135	132	135	144	145	164	164	165
Applicants with a disability	57	57	54	54	57	62	62	62	62	60
Applicants with caring responsibilities	17	17	11	11	17	19	19	18	18	14

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	292	567	0	0	114	17	17	114	114	17
Couple, no children	53	113	0	0	94	27	27	94	94	27
Couple with children	94	185	0	0	134	44	44	134	134	44
Lone parent with children	214	355	0	0	99	12	12	99	99	12
Total claims reduced	653	1,220	0	0	441	100	100	441	441	100
Employed & self employed	165	328	0	0	93	24	24	93	93	24
Applicants with a disability	60	87	0	0	45	15	15	45	45	15
Applicants with caring responsibilities	14	25	0	0	16	5	5	16	16	5

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Average weekly reduction in CTR entitlement

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	£3.10	£3.10	£3.13	£3.13	£3.02	£2.95	£2.91	£1.18	£1.18	£1.18
Couple, no children	£4.14	£4.14	£3.34	£3.34	£3.56	£4.15	£4.04	£1.72	£1.72	£1.21
Couple with children	£5.39	£5.27	£5.18	£5.05	£5.39	£4.89	£4.89	£4.53	£4.26	£4.35
Lone parent with children	£4.53	£4.18	£4.45	£4.10	£4.46	£3.40	£3.37	£2.54	£2.39	£2.49
Average weekly reduction (all claims)	£4.28	£4.10	£4.17	£3.99	£4.21	£3.74	£3.71	£2.15	£2.06	£2.07
Employed & self employed	£4.14	£4.04	£4.03	£3.90	£4.00	£4.20	£4.14	£4.02	£3.86	£3.92
Applicants with a disability	£3.79	£3.87	£3.04	£3.13	£3.79	£4.12	£4.12	£4.35	£4.35	£3.62
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£5.63	£5.90	£3.62	£4.04	£5.63	£5.51	£5.51	£6.17	£6.31	£3.69

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	£1.18	£1.76	£0.00	£0.00	£2.65	£1.55	£1.55	£2.65	£2.65	£1.55
Couple, no children	£1.21	£2.38	£0.00	£0.00	£3.95	£1.71	£1.71	£3.95	£3.95	£1.71
Couple with children	£4.10	£2.46	£0.00	£0.00	£4.27	£1.58	£1.58	£4.27	£4.27	£1.58
Lone parent with children	£2.34	£1.92	£0.00	£0.00	£2.02	£1.05	£1.05	£2.02	£2.02	£1.05
Average weekly reduction (all claims)	£1.98	£1.97	£0.00	£0.00	£3.28	£1.55	£1.55	£3.28	£3.28	£1.55
Employed & self employed	£3.74	£2.08	£0.00	£0.00	£3.40	£1.39	£1.39	£3.40	£3.40	£1.39
Applicants with a disability	£3.64	£2.17	£0.00	£0.00	£3.58	£1.19	£1.19	£3.58	£3.58	£1.19
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£3.95	£2.28	£0.00	£0.00	£3.01	£0.98	£0.98	£3.01	£3.01	£0.98

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Number of claims no longer qualifying

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1
Couple, no children	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
Couple with children	18	11	17	10	18	31	31	18	11	17
Lone parent with children	4	3	4	3	3	16	15	4	3	4
Total claims no longer qualifying	23	15	22	14	21	51	48	23	15	22
Employed & self employed	17	10	16	9	16	38	36	17	10	16
Applicants with a disability	5	3	4	2	5	9	9	5	3	4
Applicants with caring responsibilities	2	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	1

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	1	10	13	21	0	0	13	21	13	21
Couple, no children	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	3
Couple with children	10	12	12	23	0	0	12	23	12	23
Lone parent with children	3	9	12	27	0	0	12	27	12	27
Total claims no longer qualifying	14	31	37	74	0	0	37	74	37	74
Employed & self employed	9	0	35	71	0	0	35	71	35	71
Applicants with a disability	2	0	4	11	0	0	4	11	4	11
Applicants with caring responsibilities	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Average weekly loss in CTR entitlement for those no longer qualifying

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	£2.18	£2.18	£2.18	£2.18	£0.00	£7.31	£12.43	£2.18	£2.18	£2.18
Couple, no children	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7.28	£3.65	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Couple with children	£13.17	£14.95	£13.20	£15.18	£13.17	£11.82	£11.82	£13.17	£14.95	£13.20
Lone parent with children	£9.71	£7.20	£9.71	£7.20	£11.21	£10.16	£9.98	£9.71	£7.20	£9.71
Average weekly loss (all claims)	£12.09	£12.55	£12.06	£12.54	£12.89	£10.95	£11.09	£12.09	£12.55	£12.06
Employed & self employed	£10.57	£10.71	£10.44	£10.50	£10.90	£8.97	£8.81	£10.57	£10.71	£10.44
Applicants with a disability	£15.04	£17.55	£15.64	£19.99	£15.04	£11.71	£11.71	£15.04	£17.55	£15.64
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£15.16	£17.79	£17.65	£0.00	£15.16	£15.16	£15.16	£15.16	£17.79	£17.65

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	£2.18	£1.01	£1.27	£2.07	£0.00	£0.00	£1.27	£2.07	£1.27	£2.07
Couple, no children	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.63	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.63	£0.00	£3.63
Couple with children	£15.18	£1.39	£1.39	£2.28	£0.00	£0.00	£1.39	£2.28	£1.39	£2.28
Lone parent with children	£7.20	£0.97	£1.44	£3.04	£0.00	£0.00	£1.44	£3.04	£1.44	£3.04
Average weekly loss (all claims)	£12.54	£1.15	£1.36	£2.55	£0.00	£0.00	£1.36	£2.55	£1.36	£2.55
Employed & self employed	£10.50	£0.00	£1.35	£2.57	£0.00	£0.00	£1.35	£2.57	£1.35	£2.57
Applicants with a disability	£19.99	£0.00	£1.19	£2.54	£0.00	£0.00	£1.19	£2.54	£1.19	£2.54
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.18	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3.18	£0.00	£3.18

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Number of claims with increased entitlement

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	490	490	491	491	494	398	402	283	283	284
Couple, no children	95	95	99	99	97	13	13	57	57	60
Couple with children	109	120	110	121	109	31	31	85	93	85
Lone parent with children	255	256	256	257	257	192	193	145	146	146
Total claims reduced	949	961	956	968	957	634	639	570	579	575
Employed & self employed	176	186	177	187	177	146	147	147	154	147
Applicants with a disability	25	27	29	31	25	16	16	20	22	23
Applicants with caring responsibilities	6	7	13	14	6	4	4	5	6	10

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	283	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Couple, no children	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Couple with children	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lone parent with children	146	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total claims reduced	579	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employed & self employed	154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants with a disability	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants with caring responsibilities	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Summary of the impact of models for working age customers

Average weekly increase in CTR entitlement

	Forecast									
	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Single, no children	£1.31	£1.31	£1.32	£1.32	£1.55	£1.24	£1.30	£0.76	£0.76	£0.77
Couple, no children	£1.67	£1.67	£1.65	£1.65	£2.02	£3.95	£4.22	£0.89	£0.89	£0.86
Couple with children	£2.33	£2.40	£2.31	£2.39	£2.42	£5.02	£5.02	£1.74	£1.83	£1.74
Lone parent with children	£1.83	£1.84	£1.86	£1.87	£2.18	£1.90	£2.12	£1.62	£1.62	£1.65
Average weekly increase (all claims)	£1.60	£1.62	£1.61	£1.63	£1.86	£1.68	£1.79	£1.14	£1.16	£1.15
Employed & self employed	£4.09	£4.06	£4.12	£4.09	£4.26	£4.58	£4.67	£3.94	£3.91	£3.99
Applicants with a disability	£2.87	£2.74	£2.76	£2.66	£2.87	£3.84	£3.84	£2.95	£2.68	£2.70
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£1.91	£1.80	£2.34	£2.26	£1.91	£1.89	£1.89	£1.24	£1.03	£1.72

	Forecast									
	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Single, no children	£0.77	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Couple, no children	£0.91	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Couple with children	£1.83	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Lone parent with children	£1.67	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Average weekly increase (all claims)	£1.18	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Employed & self employed	£3.96	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Applicants with a disability	£2.48	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Applicants with caring responsibilities	£1.57	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

FORECAST	Estimated 2018/19 awards	Saving against estimated spend 2017/18	Estimated saving against notional* budget 2017/18	Net funding shortfall for WSC (see para. 4.7)	Estimated saving/cost for WSC
A. No change to current CTR Scheme	£2,518,900.25	£0.00	£111,579.80	£74,171.15	£0.00
B. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85% and flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant	£2,521,473.35	-£2,573.10	£109,006.70	£74,414.82	-£243.67
C. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant and with protection for children under 5 where there are >2 children	£2,531,553.53	-£12,653.28	£98,926.52	£75,369.41	-£1,198.27
D. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant and with protection for carers	£2,526,037.98	-£7,137.73	£104,442.07	£74,847.09	-£675.94
E. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant, protection for children under 5 where there are >2 children and protection for carers	£2,536,115.11	-£17,214.86	£94,364.94	£75,801.39	-£1,630.25
F. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85% and no deductions for any non-dependant	£2,537,935.05	-£19,034.80	£92,545.00	£75,973.74	-£1,802.60
G. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant, minimum CTR of £5 a week and maximum CTR of £15 a week	£2,434,835.38	£84,064.87	£195,644.67	£66,210.20	£7,960.94
H. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85%, no deduction for non-dependants, minimum CTR of £5 a week and maximum CTR of £15 a week	£2,441,619.47	£77,280.78	£188,860.58	£66,852.66	£7,318.49
I. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 80% and flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant	£2,464,543.22	£54,357.03	£165,936.83	£69,023.54	£5,147.61

FORECAST	Estimated 2018/19 awards	Saving against estimated spend 2017/18	Estimated saving against notional* budget 2017/18	Net funding shortfall for WSC (see para. 4.7)	Estimated saving/cost for WSC
J. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 80%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant and with protection for children under 5 where there are >2 children	£2,473,635.82	£45,264.43	£156,844.23	£69,884.61	£4,286.54
K. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 80%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant and with protection for carers	£2,468,876.80	£50,023.45	£161,603.25	£69,433.93	£4,737.22
L. Banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 80%, flat rate £5 deduction for each non-dependant, protection for children under 5 where there are >2 children and protection for carers	£2,477,908.31	£40,991.94	£152,571.74	£70,289.21	£3,881.94
M. Reduce maximum support through CTR to 70% for all working age recipients	£2,391,598.84	£127,301.41	£238,881.21	£62,115.70	£12,055.44
N. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £2.50 a week	£2,516,272.06	£2,628.19	£114,207.99	£73,922.26	£248.89
O. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £5.00 a week	£2,509,052.02	£9,848.23	£121,428.03	£73,238.52	£932.63
P. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set maximum CTR of £15.00 a week	£2,443,478.60	£75,421.65	£187,001.45	£67,028.72	£7,142.43
Q. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set maximum CTR of £20.00 a week	£2,510,830.82	£8,069.43	£119,649.23	£73,406.97	£764.18
R. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £2.50 a week and maximum CTR of £20.00 a week	£2,508,202.63	£10,697.62	£122,277.42	£73,158.08	£1,013.06
S. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £5.00 a week and maximum CTR of £15.00 a week	£2,433,630.37	£85,269.88	£196,849.68	£66,096.09	£8,075.06

FORECAST	Estimated 2018/19 awards	Saving against estimated spend 2017/18	Estimated saving against notional* budget 2017/18	Net funding shortfall for WSC (see para. 4.7)	Estimated saving/cost for WSC
T. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £2.50 a week and maximum CTR of £15.00 a week	£2,440,850.41	£78,049.84	£189,629.64	£66,779.83	£7,391.32
U. Retain existing CTR scheme, but set minimum CTR of £5.00 a week and maximum CTR of £20.00 a week	£2,500,982.59	£17,917.66	£129,497.46	£72,474.34	£1,696.80

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Plan

Officer completing EIA Form	Job Title	Team/Service	
Heather Tiso	Revenues & Benefits Service Manager	Revenues & Benefits Service	
Why are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment? Please ✓ as appropriate			
Proposed new policy or service	Change to policy or service	New or change to budget	Service review
	✓		
1 Description of policy, service or decision being impact assessed:			
<p>Background</p> <p>From 2013/14 district councils have operated localised Council Tax Rebate (CTR) schemes to provide assistance to people on low income. CTR replaced the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme that was administered by the council on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Councils are responsible for the design and implementation of these schemes and need to consider if they are to be revised or replaced on an annual basis. The subsidy reimbursement for CTR reduced nationally by 10% in 2013/14 with councils having the option of funding the shortfall or designing a CTR scheme that is cost neutral. The Government state any CTR scheme must protect pensioners at the existing level of support. That decision means the burden falls disproportionately upon those of Working Age.</p> <p>From 1 April 2014, funding for localised CTR is incorporated in Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) and not separately identified. The SFA has reduced by 38.7% in cash terms since 2013/14. In applying this methodology, the funding available for Localised CTR has reduced by £1,095,771 to £1,735,678. In 2016/17, we paid CTR of £1,602,175, meaning that if there is no change to the existing CTR scheme, we estimate we will have a funding shortfall of £801,166, with WSC's share of that shortfall being £75,870. The financing risk of the scheme is shared with other precepting Authorities through the tax base calculation. West Somerset's share of the collection fund in 2017/18 is 9.47%.</p> <p>West Somerset's Council Tax Rebate Scheme</p> <p>On 11 December 2012, the Council adopted the Local Council Tax Rebate scheme for 2013/14. While those of pension age receive support of up to 100% of their Council Tax liability, from 1 April 2013, the maximum support for those of working age was set at 80%.</p> <p>On 10 December 2013, the Council decided to continue the 2013/14 CTR scheme for 2014/15.</p> <p>In designing our CTR scheme, we considered customers' ability to pay and the collectability of the resultant Council Tax liability. The key changes between our local CTR scheme, for working age claimants, and the former CTB scheme are set out below. Dependent on household circumstances, more than one of these criteria below may apply simultaneously to a household.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum support is 80% of Council Tax - everyone of working age has to pay something; • Non-dependant deductions were increased; • Second adult rebate ceased for working age applicants; • Child maintenance was counted as income until 31 March 2015; • Disregards for earned income are at increased levels than those offered under CTB; • Exceptional Financial Hardship fund of £35k, through Discretionary Reduction in Council Tax Liability for short-term help (this is a Collection Fund commitment and not fully funded by WSC). <p>In December 2014, the Council decided to continue the 2014/15 CTR scheme for 2015/16 with an amendment to no longer treat maintenance received for children as income.</p> <p>In developing options for our CTR scheme for 2016/17, we worked in collaboration with the County Council (as the major preceptor) and the other Somerset District billing authorities of Taunton Deane Borough, Sedgemoor, Mendip and South Somerset. On 15 December 2015 Full Council, having regard to the consultation response and the Equality Impact Assessment, agreed to revise support for working age applicants in 2016/17 by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removing entitlement to applicants with capital over £6,000; • applying a Minimum Income for Self-Employed applicants; and • paying CTR at a level that would be no more than for a Band D property 			

In December 2016, the Council decided to align the CTR scheme for 2017/18 with some changes made by the Government to other welfare benefits. As a consequence, CTR for working age applicants from 1 April 2017 was amended as follows:

- Maximum backdating of CTR reduced from 6 months to 1 month;
- Family premium not included in the applicable amount for new applicants, or existing recipients who would otherwise have a new entitlement to the premium;
- Work Related Activity component not included in the applicable amount for new claimants of Employment and Support Allowance;
- Removal of child allowance in applicable amount for third and any subsequent children born after 1 April 2017 but protection for some customers;
- Reduction in the allowable period of temporary absence outside Great Britain from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.

West Somerset Council's current Council Tax Rebate scheme for people of working age is designed to retain the majority of features of the CTB scheme through a system of additional allowances/premiums within the means test. These additional allowances/premiums recognise the additional financial burden of childcare responsibilities disability and caring responsibilities thereby having a positive impact for such households.

As a consequence of ongoing reductions to the Settlement Funding Assessment, continuing to allow the same level of CTR in 2018/19 for working age recipients could impact negatively upon WSC's budget and the budget of those that levy a precept to it (County Council, Fire, Police Authorities and Parish Councils). An adverse effect on service provision might result in us, and the other major preceptors, having to stop, reduce or seek additional charges for services with a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable.

In addition, the DWP subsidises the cost of administering Housing Benefit, while the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) provides an annual grant towards the cost for CTR administration. However, funding has steadily decreased and is likely to be removed entirely with the move to 100% business rate retention in 2020.

Until recently, the administration of our localised CTR scheme has been both cost effective and efficient as for the majority of claims we have been able to use information supplied by claimants for a Housing Benefit claim or directly from the Department for Work and Pensions. However, CTR administration has become increasingly difficult since the roll out of the "full service for Universal Credit (UC), with the number of customers claiming UC significantly increasing. We receive information from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on any variations to the customer's income and for many customers, such changes occur every month. As our current CTR scheme does not contain any "de-minimus" for income variances, we need to reassess the amount of CTR entitlement. In changing the CTR award, we then need to issue an amended Council Tax bill and adjust any direct debit arrangements to reflect revised instalments. Changing payment arrangements can result in cancellation of the next direct debit, with instalments effectively delayed by one month. Where such changes take place every month, it is possible for Direct Debits to be continually set back so the customer then needs to pay a lump sum at the end of the financial year.

For the reasons outlined above, the cost and administration of the CTR scheme in the future could become progressively financially burdensome, as well as being increasingly complex for customers. Therefore, on 25 May 2017, the Corporate Policy Advisory Group agreed on options to take to public consultation for our CTR scheme for 2018/19.

Public consultation on proposals to change the CTR scheme in 2018/19 started on 3 July 2017 and ended on 27 August 2017. Every Council Taxpayer had the opportunity to comment on the proposals, although officers targeted responses from a random, proportionate selection of households in every parish to ensure we received sufficient responses. The options on which we consulted were as follows:

Option 1 – Change the CTR scheme for 2018/19 so entitlement for working age recipients would be based on bands of income.

Option 2 - Reduce maximum support offered by CTR from 80% for working age applicants, thereby reducing the cost of the scheme.

Option 3 – Introduce entitlement limits to reduce the cost of our existing CTR scheme.

2 People who could be affected, with particular regard to the legally defined protected characteristics¹:

Our localised CTR scheme affects all claimants who are of working age (and those of working age currently not in receipt of CTR but who may apply in the future). Limited equality data is held within WSC's CTR computer system (as the collection of such information has not been necessary for administering CTR) given the caseload can come from all sections of the community it is likely there will be claimants (and their household members) that contain the full range of protected characteristics ¹ as defined within the Equalities Act 2010 and include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation

The Government expect local authorities to establish schemes that minimise the impact on vulnerable groups. The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012 include provisions for those of working age but none of those prescribed requirements set out the level of support to be given.

3 People and Service Area who are delivering the policy/service/decision:

Council Staff in the Revenues & Benefits Service

4 Evidence used to assess impact: Please attached documents where appropriate.

We have obtained data relating to people affected from our Council Tax Rebate processing system. The data available has allowed us to analyse impact on people according to their age, disability, family circumstances and level of income. We have modelled options on scenarios with "live" data based on actual entitlements and CTR recipients at that point in time. We asked general diversity questions as part of the consultation exercise.

In addition, we have undertaken debt profiling against the Council Tax Rebate (CTR) customer base ([Appendix 4](#)) and also against those customer groups impacted most by the key elements of our localised scheme.

The impact of implementing any changes to our local Council Tax Rebate Scheme in 2018/19 for each of the protected groups, is considered below and on the following pages.

Equality Impact Assessment (by protected characteristic)

Age

The proposed scheme for 2018/19 is subject to some national prescription relating to protecting pensioners' entitlements. Therefore, we have no discretion about whether or not to follow this principle. The Government is committed to protecting pensioners on low incomes and have prescribed a scheme for pensioners through legislation. This means pensioners will not see any reduction in their CTR in comparison with their former levels of Council Tax Benefit.

Pensioners are still entitled to claim up to 100% of their Council Tax liability through CTR. The Council's general equality duty is lessened to an extent with regard to older people as Government has prescribed that pensioners are not affected by CTR. However, we have a responsibility to foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. There is a risk of harming the relationship between pensioners and working age claimants of CTR as pension age claimants are not affected and working age claimants have a greater reduction to their CTR to cover the shortfall in funding.

¹ For protected characteristics, please visit:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-all/protected-characteristics>

At 31 March 2017, just 36 (1%) CTR recipients of pension age had Council Tax arrears contrasting with 1,013 (28%) for those of working age - see Table 1 below.

Table 1	Number of claims	Cases with debt	% of cases with debt	Average debt for those in arrears	Total Debt
Pension Age	1,659	22	1%	£201.71	£4,437.54
Working age	1,251	272	22%	£286.45	£77,913.47
Total for CTR recipients	2,910	294	10%	£280.11	£82,351.01

Under Options 2 and 3, the CTR scheme would retain the majority of the former Council Tax Benefit assessment rules, including the use of applicable amount and personal allowances. The personal allowances and applicable amounts used to calculate CTR are the amounts deemed necessary to provide for basic needs based on household composition and disability. These allowances and applicable amounts take the claimant's circumstances into account and mean they are awarded more support if they have children or dependents under the age of 18.

In consultation, 21% of respondents felt we should offer extra support (protection) to young people that have left local authority care. According to Somerset County Council, there are currently no care leavers currently living in the West Somerset area, but should there be any in the future, any additional help provided to these young people would have a positive effect for this protected group.

For all options to change our scheme, we would continue to disregard Child Benefit in income calculations meaning that the added income this provides will not reduce the CTR that an applicant receives.

To mitigate any of the effects in changing our CTR scheme in 2018/19, officers could apply a discretionary reduction in Council Tax liability through exceptional hardship as appropriate and in accordance with our policy.

Disability

Disabled people have a limited ability to work and are likely to have higher level disability related living expenses. This group in particular find it difficult to access and sustain employment and therefore improve on their current financial situation. This group of people is less resilient to the impact of recession and unemployment and are often living in poverty. These further impacts on the individual's mental health.

In common with other working age recipients, people with disabilities receive less CTR under the localised scheme than they did under CTB. However, the limited changes between CTB and our local CTR scheme are not such as to introduce disproportionately adverse effects on people based on disabled people as a specific group. Outside of CTR, the Council Tax scheme itself recognises disability by exempting those with a severe mental impairment. The CTR scheme does not impact upon that exemption and it will continue to apply where appropriate. Additionally, the Council Tax scheme also recognises disability where a dwelling occupied by a disabled person has a room that is adapted or additional to meet the needs of that resident. In those cases, the band attributable to that dwelling for the purposes of Council Tax is reduced in advance of any further reduction under CTR.

In moving to an income banded CTR scheme - Option 1 ([Forecast B](#)), just 25 (29%) of customers with disabilities would receive increased CTR. For those receiving reduced CTR, the average reduction in their weekly entitlement would be £3.79 a week (£197.62 a year). Further analysis shows:

- 22 are single people with weekly incomes ranging from £110 to £263 before any income disregards are applied;
- 8 are couples with weekly incomes ranging from £214 to £457 before any income disregards are applied;
- 16 are couples with responsibility for children, with weekly incomes ranging from £326 to £614 before any income disregards are applied;
- 11 are lone parents with weekly incomes ranging from £244 to £490 before any income disregards are applied.

A further 5 disabled customers would no longer receive any CTR with weekly incomes ranging from £582 to £714.

If the Council decided to move to an income banded CTR scheme (Option1), it could choose to provide additional assistance for customers with disabilities by disregarding an amount from their income that would be equivalent to the disability premium included in the applicable amount for our current CTR scheme. Such additional support would mean that the number of customers with disabilities that would receive less CTR under a banded income scheme would reduce from 62 ([Forecast B](#)) to 58. However, such protection would result in additional complexity to the scheme proposed under Option 1 and mitigation could be more efficiently managed through the application of a reduction in Council Tax liability through exceptional hardship in accordance with our discretionary policy

Under Options 2 and 3, the personal allowances and applicable amounts currently used to calculate CTR would be retained. These allowances and applicable amounts take the claimant's circumstances into account and mean that they are awarded more support if they or anyone in their household has a disability than if the household had the same income but contained no-one with a disability.

The average level of debt for working age CTR recipients in 2016/17 receiving the disability premium was £433.48 - greater than the scheme average of £286.45 for working age claims, but only 9% of CTR recipients with a disability premium were in arrears with their Council Tax - significantly less than the scheme average of 28%.

Table 2

CTR recipients with disabilities	Number of claims	Cases with debt	% of cases with debt	Average debt for those in arrears	Total Debt
Working Age	87	8	9%	£433.58	£3,468.67

Gender

There are a greater number of female recipients of CTR within our caseload (either single, lone parents or part of a couple) than male recipients. Consequently, more females will be impacted by changes made to our CTR scheme than males. This is not deliberate but is simply a product of the makeup of our caseload. However, gender will not be a direct factor in any part of the assessment of CTR as it is not considered to be a characteristic that requires greater assistance when assessing support.

The majority of lone parents in receipt of CTR are female.

The average level of debt for working age lone parents in 2016/17 was £241.22 - less than the scheme average of £286.45. See table 3 detailing debt levels for this group.

Table 3

Lone Parents	Number of claims	Cases with debt	% of cases with debt	Average debt for those in arrears	Total Debt
Working Age	364	94	26%	£241.22	£22,674.88

Gender Reassignment

We hold no data on our Council Tax system to identifying the names or numbers of current CTR applicants who share this protected characteristic. Gender reassignment is not a factor in any part of the assessment of CTR and it is not considered to be a characteristic which requires that requires greater assistance when assessing support. In common with other working age CTR applicants, transgendered people may receive less CTR under the proposals for change in 2018/19. However, these are not such as to introduce disproportionately adverse effects on transgendered people as a specific group.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marital or civil partnership status is not currently a factor in determining CTR as it is not considered to be a characteristic that requires greater assistance when assessing support. Options for changing our CTR scheme for 2018/19 do not introduce disproportionately adverse effects on people based on their marriage or civil partnership status.

Religion and Belief

We do not gather data on religion or belief as part of the CTR application process; we do not hold full data specific to religion or belief within our caseload. Religion and belief is not a factor in any part of the assessment of Council Tax Rebate as it is not considered to be a characteristic which requires greater assistance when assessing support.

Some working age CTR applicants, people of all or no religion or belief, may receive less CTR under the proposals for change in 2018/19. However, these are not such as to introduce disproportionately adverse effects on people based on their religion or belief status.

Race

Race is not a factor in the assessment of CTR and it is not considered to be a characteristic that requires greater assistance when assessing support. Some people of all races, may receive less CTR under the proposals for change in 2018/19. However, these are not such as to introduce disproportionately adverse effects on people based on their race status.

Pregnancy and Maternity

For the purposes of CTR, pregnancy and maternity must be considered as two separate characteristics as while the applicants is pregnant, her applicable amounts and personal allowances are lower (as for a person without children). Once a child is born, it becomes part of the household composition and increased allowances are currently applied and would continue to be applied under all the options to change our CTS scheme in 2018/19.

Pregnancy alone is not a factor in the current assessment of CTR as it is not considered to be a characteristic that requires a higher level of support. Providing that the child (or children) forms part of the mother’s household composition once it is born, the application for CTR will then include the child (or children) as part of the household and the CTR available will increase which, once other income changes have been taken into account may provide for a more generous assessment of CTR and reduced Council Tax payments.

The CTR scheme would retain the current disregard of Child Benefit in income calculations for all the options in changing our scheme for 2018/19. This will mean the income that Child Benefit provides will not reduce the amount of CTR that a recipient receives as a result of having a baby.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is not a factor in any part of the assessment of CTR as it is not considered to be a characteristic which requires a higher level of support when assessing CTR. Some working age CTR applicants may receive less CTR under the proposals for change in 2018/19. However, these are not such as to introduce disproportionately adverse effects on people based on their sexual orientation.

Children and duties under the 2010 Child Poverty Act

The minimum age for receiving CTR is 18 and so people under the age of 18 will not be impacted directly by the CTR scheme. Indirect impact has been considered as people under the age of 18 are included as part of a claimant’s household and the Council has a duty to prevent child poverty as outlined in the Child Poverty Act 2010. There are 561 working age CTR recipients with children, accounting for 45% of all working age CTR recipients. Of those with children, 25% (143) have debt that at 31 March 2017 totalled £47k with these arrears making up 60% of all Council Tax debt for those of working age getting CTR. Analysis of debt levels at 31 March 2017 for working age applicants with children is shown in Table 4 below

Table 4

Working age claims with children	Number of claims	Cases with debt	% of cases with debt	Average debt for those in arrears	Total Debt
Working Age	561	143	25%	£325.68	£46,571.60

Under the CTR scheme applying before 1 April 2017, applicants with children were awarded a dependant’s addition of £66.90 for each child within the calculation of their needs (Applicable Amounts). There was no limit to the number of dependants’ additions that could be awarded. From April 2017, the Council decided to limit dependants’ additions to a maximum of two. This only affected households who had a third or subsequent child on or after 1 April 2017. We continued to include the amount for first and second children and applied protection for multiple births or for women who had a third child as the result of rape or other exceptional circumstances.

Under an income band scheme (Option1), there is additional income provision for up to 2 children. Such a limit aligns to other Welfare Benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions. The calculation of a

customer's net income would continue to disregard certain income as well as disregarding qualifying childcare costs. However, where households have 3 or more children, the limitations on child numbers could have an adverse effect. In mitigating such an effect, a disregard of £50 could be applied to net income for third and subsequent children under the age of 5 years old. Such a provision would recognise the potential limitations experienced by parents in increasing their income through employment as a result of caring for young children.

In mitigating the effects under any of the options proposed to change our CTR scheme in 2018/19, officers could apply a discretionary reduction in Council Tax liability through exceptional hardship as appropriate and in accordance with our policy.

Other Groups (non-statutory)

Employment

The number of working age CTR recipients in employment is 328, accounting for 26% of all working age recipients. Those CTR recipients without employment are 11% less likely to have Council Tax arrears, with the average value of their debt (£217.40) significantly less than for those with employment (£407.11) - see Table 5.

Table 5

Working age claims - employment status	Number of claims	Cases with debt	% of cases with debt	Average debt for those in arrears	Total Debt
In employment	328	99	30%	£407.11	£40,303.54
Not in employment	923	173	19%	£217.40	£37,609.93

For people of working age that are not in employment, the benefit cap restricts the amount in certain benefits that a household can receive. Any household receiving more than the cap will have their Housing Benefit reduced to bring them back within the limit. The Benefit Cap is £20,000 for households living in the West Somerset area. This reduction in income may mean Council Tax is more difficult to collect from those households.

Carers

People who provide care to a person with disabilities have a limited ability to work. This group may find it difficult to access and sustain employment as a result of their caring responsibilities to improve their financial situation.

In common with other working age recipients, people with caring responsibilities receive less CTR under the localised scheme than they did under CTB. However, the current CTR scheme also recognises caring responsibilities by the inclusion of a Carer Premium within the Applicable Amount, thereby providing a greater level of support.

In moving to an income banded CTR scheme - Option 1 ([Forecast B](#)), 6 customers with caring responsibilities would receive increased CTR. For those receiving reduced CTR – 17 customers, the average reduction in their weekly entitlement would be £5.63 a week (£293.56 a year). A further 2 customers with caring responsibilities would no longer receive any CTR with the average weekly loss in support being £15.16.

If the Council decided to move to an income banded CTR scheme (Option1), it could choose to provide additional assistance for customers with caring responsibilities by disregarding Carers Allowance (money for people who spend at least 35 hours a week providing regular care to someone who has a disability) from any income used to work out CTR. Such additional support would mean that the number of customers with caring responsibilities that would receive less or no CTR under a banded income scheme would reduce from 19 to 12 ([Forecast D](#)).

Under Options 2 and 3, the personal allowances and applicable amounts currently used to calculate CTR would be retained. These allowances and applicable amounts take the claimant's circumstances into account and mean that they are awarded more support if they have caring responsibilities.

Armed Forces

Veteran Benefits will continue to be fully disregarded in the means test for Council Tax Rebate. Our scheme does not appear to have a differential impact but we are aware some ex veterans experience mental health issues and have physical disabilities.

5 Conclusions on impact of proposed decision or new policy/service change:

In considering options to change our CTR scheme we have tried hard to balance the reality of a significant cut in Central Government funding to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community as far as practicable.

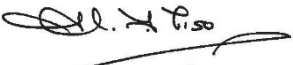
The proposed options acknowledge that recipients of CTR need to contribute more to meet the funding shortfall but also looks to protect people with protected characteristics as much as possible.

In mitigating any disproportionate effect through implementing any of the proposed options to change our CTR scheme, officers could apply a reduction in Council Tax liability through exceptional hardship as appropriate and in accordance with our discretionary policy.

6 Recommendation based on findings. These need to be outlined in the attached action plan.

Adjust the policy/decision/service.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan					
Group Affected	Action required	Expected outcome of action	Person to undertake action	Service Plan - for monitoring	Expected Completion date
Age	Young people leaving care may have particular difficulties and it is recommended that additional support be provided to help with Council Tax costs. Liaison is to be established with Somerset County Council to identify care leavers aged up to 25 to ensure they receive extra support.	Flagging affected individuals as “vulnerable” with Revenue IT systems to ensure collection of debt is appropriately managed	DHP/Welfare Reform Officer	Revenues & Benefits	On-going
Disability	Members to consider providing mitigation against any adverse effects of the proposed changes. For those customers with reduced or no entitlement through any changes applied to the CTR scheme for 2018/19, invite applications for a discretionary reduction in Council Tax liability in accordance with agreed policy	Flagging affected individuals as “vulnerable” with Revenue IT systems to ensure collection of debt is appropriately managed. Provide short-term help for instances of hardship.	DHP/Welfare Reform Officer	Revenues & Benefits	Throughout 2018/19
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pregnancy and Maternity	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Race	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Gender Re-assignment	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Religion and Belief	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable		
Sex	There are a greater number of female CTR recipients within our caseload (either single, lone parents or part of a couple) than male recipients. Consequently, more females will be impacted by changes made to our scheme. However, gender is not a direct factor in any part of the assessment of CTR as it is not considered to be a characteristic that requires a higher applicable amount when assessing support.	Provide short-term help for instances of hardship.	DHP/Welfare Reform Officer	Revenues & Benefits	On-going		
Sexual Orientation	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable		
Rurality	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	No issues identified that would result in a disproportionate effect through proposed changes.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable		
Author's Signature:		Report Title	Review of CTR scheme for 2018/19	Date	28/9/2017/2017	EIA Version	1.2
Contact Details:	Tel:	01823 356541	Email:	h.tiso@tauntondeane.gov.uk			

Debt Profile for working age CTR recipients @ 31 March 2017

	Number of cases	Cases with debt	Percentage of cases with debt	Average arrears cases	Average arrears across scheme	Total arrears
Single, no children	577	109	19%	£220.19	£41.60	£24,000.84
Couple no children	113	20	18%	£367.05	£64.96	£7,341.03
Couple with children	197	49	25%	£487.69	£121.30	£23,896.72
Lone parent with children	364	94	26%	£241.22	£62.29	£22,674.88
Total	1,251	272	22%	£286.45	£62.28	£77,913.47
Employed & self employed	328	99	30%	£407.11	£122.88	£40,303.54
Applicants with a disability	87	8	9%	£433.58	£39.87	£3,468.67
Applicants with caring responsibilities	25	2	8%	£447.91	£35.83	£895.81

Impact of banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85% and £5 deduction for each non-dependant where CTR recipient is in arrears

Working age customers in arrears	Number reduced	Average weekly reduction	Total CTR lost for those reduced in arrears	Number increased	Average weekly increase	Total CTR increased for those in arrears	Applicants that would no longer qualify	Average weekly loss for those no longer entitled	Total CTR lost for those in arrears who no longer qualify
Single	17	£3.64	£3,226.88	92	£1.65	£7,934.49	0	£0.00	£0.00
Couple	4	£2.48	£517.11	16	£2.63	£2,193.30	0	£0.00	£0.00
Couple + children	19	£5.04	£4,995.20	30	£2.53	£3,954.13	7	£14.96	£5,459.08
Lone parent	31	£4.17	£6,734.37	63	£1.49	£4,878.78	3	£11.21	£1,753.17
Total	71	£4.18	£15,473.56	201	£1.81	£18,960.70	10	£13.83	£7,212.25
Employed	42	£4.31	£9,430.52	47	£4.05	£9,920.41	7	£12.05	£4,398.23
Disabled	4	£4.31	£898.89	3	£4.65	£727.85	1	£13.18	£687.10
Carer	1	£6.80	£354.68	0	£0.00	£0.00	1	£13.18	£687.10

Impact of banded income scheme with maximum CTR of 85% and £5 deduction for each non-dependant where CTR recipient is in arrears

Working age customers in arrears	% of those in arrears with reduced CTR	% of those in arrears with increased CTR
Single	16%	84%
Couple	20%	80%
Couple + children	39%	61%
Lone parent	33%	67%
Total	26%	74%
Employed	42%	47%
Disabled	50%	38%
Carer	50%	0%

Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2017/18

October 26th	November (special) 23rd	December 7th	January (Budget)	February	TBC
Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	
Review of the Council Tax Rebate Scheme for 18/19 – H. Tiso	2018/19 Draft Fees and Charges – P. Fitzgerald	Parking Strategy Overview – C. Hall	Draft Revenue Budget – P. Fitzgerald		
Role of Planning Enforcement in WS – T. Burton	2018/19 Budget and MTFP Update -P. Fitzgerald	West Somerset Opportunity Area Draft Plan – C. Matthews	Draft Capital Budget – P. Fitzgerald		
South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Review of Earmarked Reserves – P. Fitzgerald		Draft Treasury and Investment Strategy – P. Fitzgerald		

CCG Health Forums – Somerset CCG	Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan – C. Hall				

