

**APPENDIX A**  
**CONSULTATION BOOKLET**



# have your say council tax support is changing



Consultation document



As you may be aware, the Government has imposed on councils the responsibility for how they support people in receipt of Council Tax Support, however they cut the funding before passing it over to us.

Harrow Council introduced a two year scheme in 2013/14 to administer Council Tax Support, and we now need to review how that scheme operates. We now have an opportunity to see how it has operated over the last year and use that experience to make changes to the scheme where necessary.

The Government is continuing to cut the money it gives to Harrow Council, which includes funding for Council Tax Support. In Harrow this means we face a shortfall of £75m over the next four years.

This booklet and the consultation it accompanies are about difficult decisions we need to make in continuing to run the Council Tax Support scheme.

It is important to stress that this situation results from a financial settlement that has been imposed on the Council by the Government.

As portfolio holder for finance, I am committed to protecting the most vulnerable in our society and Council Tax Support is of course aimed at just those people.

This consultation is about picking the fairest route through the reality of the options before us and making the best choices for our community.

It is vitally important that we hear from you, the people who will be affected, and that you tell us what you think. The consultation runs from the 7th July to the 12th September this year and the feedback we get will influence how we provide Council Tax Support from next year.

You can get in touch by email or phone, and the details of how to do that are in this booklet.

The likelihood is that this consultation will lead to some people currently receiving Council Tax Support losing some of that income. Our job, working with you, is to collectively ensure that the most vulnerable people in Harrow are protected from the harsh choices being imposed on us by the Government.

**Cllr Sachin Shah**  
Portfolio Holder for Finance and Major Contracts.

## Context

As part of the programme of welfare reforms, in April 2013 Council Tax Support replaced Council Tax Benefit. This meant that local authorities had to put in place local schemes to help low income households with their Council Tax. Local authorities were given less money than they previously had to run their schemes and also no longer receive increases in funding to cater for additional pressures, such as more residents claiming Council Tax Support.

Due to these changes with the funding and additional savings that Councils have to make, Harrow Council is reviewing its Council Tax Support Scheme and is proposing to implement the changes from April 2015.

## Why are we consulting?

Harrow Council is required to make savings of £75m by 2018/19. This will mean that potentially difficult decisions need to be made about the services the Council can afford to deliver.

We aim to ensure our residents and stakeholders have an opportunity to have their say in these decisions and will always consult with residents where appropriate.

Council Tax Support has been in operation for over a year. We now have data about how Harrow's scheme has impacted residents, about what has worked and what

could be improved. The review is therefore an opportunity to take stock and consider what could be changed.

We want to give you the opportunity to feed into the development of the revised Council Tax Support Scheme, so will consult with you between 7th July 2014 and 12th September 2014 to give you the chance to have your say.

## What is Council Tax?

Council Tax is a local tax set by the Council based on the valuation band of your property. Your home is placed in one of eight valuation bands based on its value at 1st April 1991. The Council is responsible for collecting Council Tax and this money funds about 20% of local public services, including refuse collection, social services, environmental health and education. Some of the money collected is passed to the Greater London Authority to help fund police, fire and public transport.

If the Council doesn't collect the Council Tax, the services it delivers may be affected.



## What is Council Tax Support?

Council Tax Support is financial assistance available to low income households to help pay their Council Tax. It is also known as Council Tax Reduction.

Council Tax Support for pensioner claims is set by the Department for Communities and Local Government, not the Council. **Pensioners will therefore not be affected by the changes we are considering in this consultation.**

Working age people in Harrow all have to pay something toward their Council Tax. The amount they have to pay depends on how much their Council Tax is, their income and the makeup of their household.

## Why is Council Tax Support changing?

Every year local authorities are required to consider whether to review their Council Tax Support Scheme. Harrow will have less money available to fund the Council Tax Support Scheme from 2015-16. In the short to medium term, we expect to have to reduce the amount Harrow Council spends on Council Tax Support expenditure by up to £2 million. This means we may have to change the scheme and make it less generous in order to find the savings.

In 2014/15 Harrow expects to spend £15.5 million on Council Tax Support for around 15,500 households. We could make savings by changing the scheme either in one go or over several years which would possibly allow for the changes to be phased in.

## The current Council Tax Support Scheme

When we were developing our local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2013, we asked for your views. The feedback that you provided was used to shape the scheme for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Harrow's current Council Tax Support Scheme is available to view at [www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport)

The current Council Tax Support Scheme has three groups of claimants:

- 1. Pensioners** – who are not affected by these changes
- 2. Working Age Disabled and Working Age War Pension recipients** – which consists of households where the customer, a partner or a dependent child is physically or mentally disabled and receives one of the following: Disability Living Allowance, Employment Support Allowance (Support group), Incapacity Benefit, Mobility Supplement, Severe Disablement Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Armed Forces Independence Payment,

people who are registered blind; people who live in a property which has been granted a disabled band reduction; or anyone who is working age and receives War Disablement Pension or War Widows Pension.

This group are referred to in this booklet as Working Age Disabled.

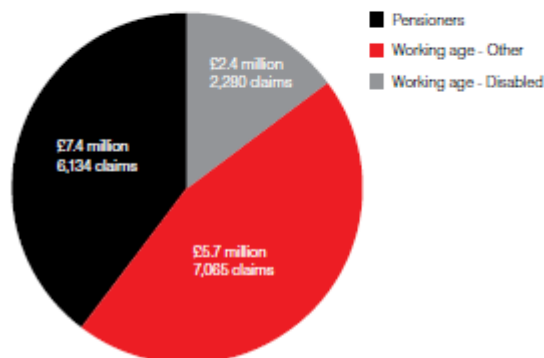
- 3. All other working age** – this group is for people who do not fall into either of the above categories.

Chart 1 below shows the proportion of the total Council Tax Support fund that is spent on each of these groups. Pensioners receive 48% of the fund, while they account for 39% of the caseload. The caseload is the total number of claims we have at any one time. The law does not allow us to change how much of the fund is given to the pensioner group.

Working Age Disabled households receive 15% of the fund for 16% of the caseload, while other working age households receive 37% of the fund for 46% of the caseload.

Chart 1

Current Council Tax Support spend across caseload



The current Council Tax Support Scheme provides different levels of support for each of the three groups of people. The law says we have to pay pensioners up to 100% of their Council Tax depending on their income. All working age people have to pay something.

We want to give you the opportunity to help shape Harrow's Council Tax Support Scheme. The changes will apply from April 2015. We want to make the scheme flexible enough to reduce the need to review it again for up to three years to the end of March 2018. At this stage a decision will be taken whether to review the scheme again.

It is likely that a change to the Council Tax Support Scheme will affect many working age claimants and their households. The scheme affects different groups of people in different ways. Some examples of these groups and how they are affected by the current Council Tax Support Scheme are given below. For definitions of some of the terms used that relate to the scheme, please go to page 11. People could fall into more than one of the groups listed.

## Families with children

- Child Benefit, which is paid to households with children, is not included as income when working out Council Tax Support.
- When working out how much

Council Tax Support someone can receive, we calculate a household allowance. This is the amount the law says a household needs to live off. The household allowance for families with children is increased to account for their additional costs.

- If the claimant or their partner is working, then child care costs may be taken into account as an expense.
- Large families are more likely to live in larger properties which have a higher Council Tax charge. The families living in larger properties will have to pay more Council Tax.

## Lone parents

- Lone parents are affected by the Council Tax Support Scheme in the same way as Families with Children above.

## Single people and childless couples

- Unless someone in this group also falls into one of the other groups, such as people in receipt of disability benefits, they are likely to have one of the lowest levels of income compared to the amount of Council Tax they are asked to pay. As the Council Tax Support Scheme currently has a flat rate liability cap of 70% for non-disabled working age households, this group are likely to have to pay proportionately more toward their

Council Tax in relation to their income than some other groups.

### People in receipt of disability benefits

- Households where someone receives disability benefits such as Disability Living Allowance have a lower liability cap of 88% (see page 5 for details of who is in the Working Age Disabled group). This means they have to pay less toward their Council Tax than other working age people who have a liability cap of 70%. This was put in place as a direct result of feedback from the consultation in 2012 when the scheme was first being developed.
- People whose income is above their household allowance (see Families with Children on page 7 for definition of household allowance) and they receive certain disability benefits, will not have some of their benefits taken into account when calculating their Council Tax Support.
- There is no non-dependant deduction taken for households where the claimant or their partner receives Disability Living Allowance Care Component or Personal Independence Payments Daily Living Component. A non-dependant is an adult who lives in the Council Tax Support household but is not the claimant or their partner

- People who receive disability benefits will have a higher household allowance (see Families with Children on page 7 for definition of household allowance) as the law says these households need more money to live off because they are expected to have higher expenses

### People in receipt of other benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)

- Households who receive one of the above benefits are likely to be on the lowest level of income, particularly if they don't have children
- To receive any extra help from the Council Tax Support Scheme they would also have to fall into one of the other groups, such as people in receipt of disability benefits. Where they don't fall into another group, this category is likely to be charged a proportionately higher level of their Council Tax compared to their income.

### Full-time and part-time workers

- When people work, some of their income will not be taken into account when working out their Council Tax Support. We call this an earnings disregard, which is the amount that is not included and depends on the number of hours

they work and the circumstances of the household. Lone parents can have between £25.00 to £42.10 of their weekly earnings ignored when working out their Council Tax Support. Single childless people have the least amount not included each week at between £5.00 to £22.10.

- If they have children then child care costs may be taken into account as an expense
- For every £1 any group receives above their household allowance (see Families with Children above for definition of household allowance), they have to contribute 30p toward their Council Tax. Taking into account how much a working household's other benefits will be reduced by once they start work, they should still be better off in work, than out. However, it should be noted that working households may still have low incomes and need financial help to pay their Council Tax.

### Carers

- For the purposes of Council Tax Support, this group only includes people who receive Carers Allowance
- Unless carers fit into the Disabled group above, they will be affected by the 70% Council Tax Support liability cap and have to pay at least 30% of their Council Tax.
- If a carer is looking after someone

they live with, this may be in a larger property and therefore have a higher Council Tax charge

- People in receipt of Carers Allowance will have a higher household allowance (see Families with Children on page 7 for definition of household allowance).

When thinking about how different groups are affected by the Council Tax Support Scheme, it is important to remember that they will have different levels of expenses, depending on their circumstance. Some households receive additional income because they are expected to have additional costs, for example because of a disability.

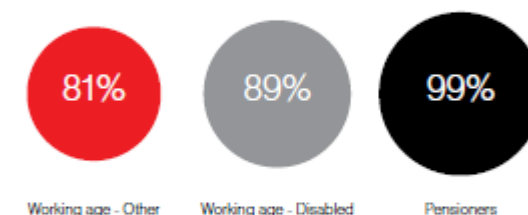
As we will only have a limited pot of money, if the scheme remains unchanged for one group, another group will have to pay more to allow for this.

When changing the Council Tax Support Scheme the Council must also consider how much people can realistically afford to pay towards the Council Tax they are charged. Some households have additional incomes because of their circumstances. However, others who do not have additional income may be asked to pay proportionately more toward their Council Tax. If people cannot afford to pay their Council Tax then a debt will be owed to the Council and therefore the Council will not have the funding it needs to be able to deliver services.

In 2013/14 we collected 97.5% of the total Council Tax charged. The chart below shows the amount of Council Tax collected by each of the Council Tax Support groups we spoke about earlier in this document.

Chart 2  
Council Tax Collection chart

### Percentage of Council Tax collected in 2013-2014 from Council Tax Support claimants



Overall, 86.5% of Council Tax was collected in 2013/14 from Council Tax Support recipients.

## Types of changes we could make

There are many different rules within the Council Tax Support Scheme. The level of savings we are considering can only be made by changing certain rules. Amending the rules will have a different effect on different groups, although this will only affect working age claimant households. When making these changes we have to consider the financial ability of households to pay their Council Tax. If we can't collect the Council Tax, then the Council's ability to deliver services is reduced.

Below are the main rules that could be changed either on their own or in combination to achieve different levels of savings. We have explained what the rules mean and who could be affected by changing the rule. On page 15 we have presented four proposed schemes that include changes to these rules.

**Liability Cap** – this is the maximum amount of the Council Tax charge that will be taken into account to work out Council Tax Support. In the current scheme this is 86% for people in the Working Age Disabled Group (see page 5 for a definition of this group) and 70% for other working age people. This means they have to pay at least 14% and 30% towards their Council Tax respectively.

If the liability cap is changed, then all working age people could be affected. After considering information about our existing Council Tax Support scheme, we are not proposing to reduce the liability cap for the working age non-disabled any lower than the current level of 70%, because of the impact on this particular group in relation to the ability to pay. They already have to use proportionately more of their income to pay Council Tax and some may become unable to pay if this change was made. As the working age disabled group currently have a liability cap of 86%, we have proposed reducing this by different amounts in the proposed scheme options later in this booklet.

**Include Disability Benefits as Income** – Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments are not currently included as income when working out Council Tax Support. These benefits could be treated as income.

Using disability benefits as income, would affect households where the claimant or partner receive Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments and have a combined income above their household allowance. A household allowance is the level the law says a household needs to live on. It is worked out depending on the circumstance of the household, for example they will be given a higher level if someone has a disability or if there are children living in the household. Households with an income above their household allowance will not be able to receive the maximum Council Tax Support. These households are normally households where the claimant or their partner work.

Claimants who are entitled to full Council Tax Support because they receive benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) will not be affected by this change.

**Include Child Benefit as Income** – Child Benefit is not currently included as income when working out Council Tax Support. Child Benefit could be treated as income.

If Child Benefit was used as income all households with children and with a level of income above their household allowance would be asked to pay more toward their Council Tax (see Include Disability Benefits as income above for a definition of household allowance).

Claimants who are entitled to full Council Tax Support because they receive benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) will not be affected by this change.



**Remove additional earnings disregards** – Currently when people work some of their income is not included when working out their Council Tax Support. If they work above a certain number of hours a week, an extra amount of their income is not included. This extra amount is called the additional earnings disregard and could be included as income.

Most people who work and receive Council Tax Support get the additional earnings disregard and would be affected by this change.

**Minimum weekly Council Tax Support level** – If the amount of Council Tax Support a household is entitled to is less than £2 a week, then under the current scheme they will not be given any support. The level of this minimum award could be increased.

Changing the minimum weekly Council Tax Support level would largely affect people who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support or where there are non-dependants in the household.

## Non-dependant deductions

– non-dependants are adults who live in the Council Tax Support household but are not the claimant or their partner. A deduction is made from the Council Tax Support award for each non-dependant. The amount of the deduction depends on the non-dependant's income. The level of the non-dependant deductions could be changed. They are currently between £3.30 up to a maximum of £19.80 per week. All of the current and proposed non-dependant deductions can be found at [www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport)

If non-dependant deductions were changed all working age households with non-dependants would be affected by this change. The exception to this is households where the claimant or partner receives Disability Living Allowance Care Component or the Personal Independence Payment Daily Living Component as no non-dependant deduction is taken for these households.



### Proposed schemes

We have detailed below four proposed Council Tax Support schemes. Each of the proposed schemes will enable the highest level of savings to be found.

The information used to create the four proposed schemes is based on data as at 31st March 2014. While we intend to keep the rules within our final scheme as stated in the proposals below, if there are changes to the caseload or other data by the time we set our scheme, we will consider making amendments to the scheme to accommodate this. This means Council Tax Support levels could be slightly higher or lower than stated below.

Should it be identified that the Council needs to save less than the maximum £2 million then the rules within the final scheme may be adjusted according to the level of savings required.

The types of changes we have made to the Council Tax Support rules in the proposed schemes are all explained in the section "Types of Changes We Could Make". The proposed schemes will impact groups in different ways. The rules can be used in various ways to achieve the savings we need to make, although there are only two key rules that will enable enough money to be found to make the required savings. These are the liability cap and including child benefit as income.

We have only proposed changing the liability cap for the Working Age Disabled group because households in the Working Age Other group already pay at least 30% of their Council Tax. In general this is a higher proportion of their income than for working age disabled households.

While the proposed schemes find the £2 million savings for Harrow in one go, it may be possible to implement a new scheme in a phased approach across two or more years starting from April 2015. Should the savings require less than £2 million there may still be a need to phase the savings over a period of time.

The current Council Tax Support scheme can be viewed at [www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport). The changes to the current scheme to show the proposed options are also available online at [www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation)

For definitions of the terms used below, please see page 11.

Chart 3 summarises the current scheme and the changes under each of the four model schemes

Rule	Current Council Tax Support Scheme	Proposed Model Scheme 1	Proposed Model Scheme 2	Proposed Model Scheme 3	Proposed Model Scheme 4
Liability Cap	80% - Working age disabled	70% - All working age	75% - Working age disabled	80% - Working age disabled	70% - Working age disabled
	70% - Working age other		70% - Working age other	70% - Working age other	70% - Working age other
Include disability benefits as income for people who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support	No	No	Yes	No	No
Include Child Benefit as income for people who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partly - Only for families with more than one child
Keep additional earnings disregard	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Minimum weekly Council Tax Support level	£2.00	£7.50	£6.50	£6.50	£10.00
Non-dependant deductions	£3.30 up to £12.00 per week	Increased to the next whole £	£5 up to £25 per week	£5 up to £25 per week	£5 up to £25 per week

Below we have summarised who will be affected by each of the proposed schemes. Some people will fall into more than one group and could be affected by more than one change in each of the schemes. The information below should therefore only be used as a guide. More information is available on the website [www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation), by calling 020 8736 6885 or by attending one of our events listed at the back of this booklet. Additional details can be found online.

#### Scheme 1

Many working age Council Tax Support claimants will have to pay more towards their Council Tax. However, out of the four schemes proposed, scheme 1 will affect the following groups the **most**

- Working age disabled
- Families who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support

This scheme impacts the following groups, although **not as severely** as in one of the other proposed schemes

- Households who receive a lower level of Council Tax Support

Groups **less** affected by proposed scheme 1 are listed below, although if a household also falls into one of the groups listed above then they could be worse off

- Workers, although they could be impacted if they fall into one of the above groups
- Households with non-dependants

Households in the Working Age Other group in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) who do not have non-dependants living in their household would **not** be affected by this proposed model scheme.

### Scheme 2

Many working age Council Tax Support claimants will have to pay more towards their Council Tax. However, out of the four schemes proposed, scheme 2 will affect the following groups the **most**

- Working age disabled who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support
- Families who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support

Households with non-dependants  
This scheme impacts the following groups, although **not as severely** as in one or more of the other proposed schemes

- Working age disabled who are entitled to full Council Tax Support
- Households who receive a lower level of Council Tax Support

Groups **less** affected by proposed scheme 2 are listed below, although if a household also falls into one of the groups listed above, then they could be worse off

- Workers, although they could be impacted if they fall into one of the above groups

Households in the Working Age Other group in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) who do not have non-dependants living in their household would **not** be affected by this proposed model scheme.

### Scheme 3

Many working age Council Tax Support claimants will have to pay more towards their Council Tax. However, out of the four schemes proposed, scheme 3 will affect the following groups the **most**

- Families who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support
- Households with non-dependants
- Most working households

This scheme impacts the following groups, although **not as severely** as in two of the other proposed schemes

- Households who receive a lower level of Council Tax Support

Groups **less** affected by proposed scheme 3 are listed below, although if a household also falls into one of the groups listed above then they could be worse off

- Working age disabled groups who will receive less Council Tax Support than they do now, but more than in any of the other proposed schemes

Households in the Working Age Other group in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) who do not have non-dependants living in their household would **not** be affected by this proposed model scheme.

### Scheme 4

Many working age Council Tax Support claimants will have to pay more towards their Council Tax. However, out of the four schemes proposed, scheme 4 will affect the following groups the **most**

- Most working households
- Households who receive a lower level of Council Tax Support
- Households with non-dependants

This scheme impacts the following groups, although **not as severely** as in one or more of the other proposed schemes

- Working age disabled
- Families with more than one child who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support

Groups **less** affected by proposed scheme 4 are listed below, although if a household also falls into one of the groups listed above then they could be worse off

- Families with only one child who are not entitled to full Council Tax Support

Households in the Working Age Other group in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based), Income Support or Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) who do not have non-dependants living in their household would not be affected by this proposed model



To help you further understand how these changes could affect people, we have shown in chart 4 the average amount of Council Tax Support that groups could receive and how much less this is than under the current scheme. This is only an average amount and the changes will affect everyone differently depending on their circumstances. You also need to remember that households have varying levels of income, are charged different amounts of Council Tax and their expenses will differ.



Category	Number of households affected	Current average weekly Council Tax Support entitlement	Average weekly reduction in Council Tax Support			
			Proposed Model Scheme 1	Proposed Model Scheme 2	Proposed Model Scheme 3	Proposed Model Scheme 4
Single people and childless couples	3,675	£14.83	-£1.97	-£1.96	-£1.19	-£2.22
Families with 1 or 2 children	4,357	£13.82	-£3.96	-£3.39	-£3.03	-£3.09
Families with 3 or more children	2,262	£7.71	-£6.60	-£6.40	-£7.46	-£6.47
Leavers only	3,310	£13.76	-£2.01	-£2.55	-£2.70	-£2.51
Full-time or part-time workers	4,752	£12.58	-£5.62	-£5.65	-£6.70	-£5.81
Carens	762	£19.23	-£3.94	-£3.88	-£2.95	-£3.56
People in receipt of disability benefit and entitled to full Council Tax Support	2,281	£19.82	-£4.49	-£4.38	-£2.20	-£2.54
People in receipt of disability benefits and entitled to partial Council Tax Support	512	£17.82	-£6.22	-£3.81	-£4.71	-£5.44
Households with non-dependants	1,073	£12.69	-£3.26	-£4.05	-£4.22	-£4.53

### How you can give your views?

We will be talking to you from Monday, 7 July 2014 through to Friday, 12th September 2014.

There are lots of ways you can give us your views:

**Questionnaires** – You can start by filling in the questionnaire that is inserted into this booklet.

**Event Days** – You can also come and see us in person at one of our events/ workshops. Please come along and talk to us when we are out, we'll be around the Borough at the following times –

- **Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th July** – Roxeth Show, Roxeth Recreation Ground, Eastcote Road, South Harrow (11am to 5pm on both days)
- **Thursday 17th July** – Harrow Town Centre, outside BHS, St Anns Road (11am to 4pm)
- **Thursday 31st July** – Roxeth Library, Northolt Road, South Harrow (10.30am-3.30pm)
- **Friday 1st August** – Morrison's Supermarket, Uxbridge Road, Hatch End (12pm-7pm)
- **Saturday 2nd August** – Sainsbury's Supermarket, Northolt Road, South Harrow (10am to 4pm)
- **Saturday 16th August** – Harrow Town Centre, outside BHS, St Anns Road (11am-4pm)

**Discussion Groups** – We will be talking to people most affected by the changes.

**Workshops/Meetings** – We will be working with Voluntary Groups in the area to ensure users of their services are given the opportunity to have their say.

**Online** – Visit [www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation) where you'll find all the information about the consultation, you can also complete the questionnaire online as well.

**Postal Survey** – We will be carrying out a postal survey with some of our residents including Council Tax Support recipients.

### Contact Details

You can contact us with your views on the options for the new Council Tax Support Scheme in the following way:

Web:	<a href="http://www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation">www.harrow.gov.uk/ctsconsultation</a>
Telephone:	020 8736 6885 - Please note there will be an answer phone on this telephone. Please leave your telephone number and we will call you back.
Freepost:	London Borough of Harrow Freepost P.O. Box 730 Civic Centre Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2DU.
Email:	<a href="mailto:CTS.Consultation@harrow.gov.uk">CTS.Consultation@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Facebook:	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/lbharrow">http://www.facebook.com/lbharrow</a>
Twitter:	<a href="http://www.twitter.com/harrow_council">www.twitter.com/harrow_council</a>

### How the decisions will be made

Once the consultation is complete the feedback will be collated and anonymised to ensure the consultation is transparent and inclusive. This will then ensure your feedback shapes the recommendations for any changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

A report will then be developed which will be presented at the Council's Cabinet meeting in November where the final decision on what the scheme is going to look like will be made.

We will write a report about the views we have collected and how they have shaped the changes. This will be available for you to read should you wish to. We will write to you personally if you are going to be affected.



## **APPENDIX B**

### **CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE**





## Council Tax Support Consultation Questionnaire

### We want your views

Your views are needed to help shape our scheme. Therefore please complete the following questionnaire and return it to us by Freepost to the following address;

Harrow Council, Freepost, PO Box 730,  
Civic Centre, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 2DU

Questionnaires must be returned no later than **12th September 2014**

To help you answer the questions below, please read the Council Tax Support consultation document which gives information about why we are changing our scheme and explains the terms used in this questionnaire. The changes will only affect claimants who are working age, not pensioners.



We have asked below which of the four schemes you think we should adopt. You can select more than one scheme if you think either would be acceptable. We have also asked which groups you believe will be disadvantaged by each of the schemes. For more information on each of the schemes, please see section Proposed Schemes in the Council Tax Support consultation document.

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### Question 1a

**Do you think Harrow Council should adopt Proposed Scheme 1?**

Yes  No

**Which of the following groups do you think will be disadvantaged by Proposed Scheme 1?**

- |   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Single People/Childless Couples   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Families with 1 or 2 children   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Families with 3 or more children  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lone Parents  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Full-time or part-time workers  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Carers  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People in receipt of disability benefits and entitled to full Council Tax Support     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People in receipt of disability benefits and not entitled to full Council Tax Support | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Households with non-dependants  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| None of these groups  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Thinking about the groups which you have ticked 'yes' for above, please tell us why you think they will be affected?**

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**Question 1b**

**Do you think Harrow Council should adopt Proposed Scheme 2?**

Yes  No

**Which of the following groups do you think will be disadvantaged by Proposed Scheme 2?**

Single People/Childless Couples Yes  No

Families with 1 or 2 children Yes  No

Families with 3 or more children Yes  No

Lone Parents Yes  No

Full-time or part-time workers Yes  No

Carers Yes  No

People in receipt of disability benefits and entitled to full Council Tax Support Yes  No

People in receipt of disability benefits and not entitled to full Council Tax Support Yes  No

Households with non-dependants Yes  No

None of these groups Yes  No

**Thinking about the groups which you have ticked 'yes' for above, please tell us why you think they will be affected?**

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**Question 1c**

**Do you think Harrow Council should adopt Proposed Scheme 3?**

Yes  No

**Which of the following groups do you think will be disadvantaged by Proposed Scheme 3?**

Single People/Childless Couples Yes  No

Families with 1 or 2 children Yes  No

Families with 3 or more children Yes  No

Lone Parents Yes  No

Full-time or part-time workers Yes  No

Carers Yes  No

People in receipt of disability benefits and entitled to full Council Tax Support Yes  No

People in receipt of disability benefits and not entitled to full Council Tax Support Yes  No

Households with non-dependants Yes  No

None of these groups Yes  No

**Thinking about the groups which you have ticked 'yes' for above, please tell us why you think they will be affected?**

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**Question 1d**

**Do you think Harrow Council should adopt Proposed Scheme 4?**

Yes  No

**Which of the following groups do you think will be disadvantaged by Proposed Scheme 4?**

- |   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Single People/Childless Couples   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Families with 1 or 2 children   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Families with 3 or more children  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lone Parents  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Full-time or part-time workers  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Carers  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People in receipt of disability benefits and entitled to full Council Tax Support     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People in receipt of disability benefits and not entitled to full Council Tax Support | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Households with non-dependants  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| None of these groups  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Thinking about the groups which you have ticked 'yes' for above, please tell us why you think they will be affected?**

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**Question 1e**

Are there any other groups that we have not identified above that you think will be detrimentally affected by any of the proposed schemes?

Yes  No

**Please tell us which groups these are and why you think they will be affected.**

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**Question 2**

Changes to Harrow's Council Tax Support Scheme could be implemented in full from April 2015, or phased in over 2 or more years. If the changes were phased in, this would still start from April 2015 but continue over a longer period. **When do you think changes to the scheme should be implemented? (Please tick your preference)**

In full from April 2015 Yes  No

Phased in over 2 or more years Yes  No



**Ethnic origin** – What is your ethnic origin?

**Asian or Asian British**

- Afghani       Bangladeshi       Chinese  
 Indian       Pakistani       Sri Lankan  
 Any other Asian background – please specify
- 

**Black or Black British**

- African       Caribbean  
 Somali       Any other Black background – please specify
- 

**Mixed background**

- White and Black African       White and Black Caribbean  
 White and Asian       Any other mixed background – please specify
- 

**Other ethnic background**

- Arab       Iranian       Any other Ethnic group – please specify
- 

**White or White British**

- Albanian       English       Gypsy / Irish Traveller  
 Irish       Polish       Romanian       Scottish  
 Welsh       Any other White background - please specify
- 

**Marriage or Civil Partnership**

- Are you married?       Yes       No  
Are you in a Civil Partnership?       Yes       No
- 

**Pregnancy or Maternity**

Have you been pregnant and / or on maternity leave during the past 2 years?

- Yes       No

Religion and belief – What is your religion?

- Buddhism       Judaism  
 Christianity (all denominations)       Sikh  
 Hinduism       Zoroastrian  
 Islam       No religion / Atheist  
 Jainism       Other -please specify

**Sex** - Are you?

- Male       Female

**Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?**

- Yes       No

**Sexual orientation** - What is your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual       Gay Man  
 Gay Woman / Lesbian       Heterosexual  
 Other – Please specify

