

**Consultation comments**

<p><b>Q2 -</b>  <b>Do you agree that the Council should continue with the current Council Tax Reduction scheme?</b></p>
<p>why should those who live alone pay the same as families of 3 plus members for the same service as they generate less need</p>
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<p>Anyone on highest rate dal or pip and in support group of esa should be entitled to full reduction</p>
<p>Pensioners can afford to pay more</p>
<p>With government grants decreasing year on year the current Council Tax Reduction scheme cannot continue. The deficit needs to be obtained from somewhere to protect services and so amendments to the CTR scheme are required.</p>
<p>The decision would be made by local authority.</p>
<p>I do not believe it is financially sustainable at it's current level of funding and the increased cost should not be met by every Taxpayer within Eastbourne</p>

<p><b>Q3 – If you agree with the principle of every working age person having to make a minimum payment towards their council tax what level of payment do you think someone should make.</b></p>
<p>what about disabled people and unemployed individuals</p>
<p>I consider that all who work and who live in Eastbourne should contribute to the Council Tax</p>
<p>This is less than a packet of cigarettes per week. It is good for them to make a contribution towards the basic services we all enjoy eg refuse collection, schools etc</p>
<p>It would have to depend on their circumstances, the disabled may be exempt?</p>
<p>sliding scale based on income</p>
<p>In assessing a persons ability to pay account should be taken of their essential expenditures. e.g pay TV subs. of £50-60 per month for sport and films are not essential, commitments to pay for a washing machine or cooker are in my opinion are</p>

**Q5 – Proposal 2 – to put in place a minimum income for self-employed claimants.**

times are hard particularly if running your own business and earning fluctuate so no account of income below the minimum level is unfair

self employed people cannot guarantee their income

The minimum wage should be at the level of the Living wage.

I see the problem as trying to prove the income...

Council tax is part of running a business, so, although help should be given, some tax needs to be paid

In principle this is reasonable. But, if this is applied for Council Tax Reduction should it not also be applied to Housing Benefit?

Many start up need longer to establish themselves than one year and have often been forced into a "self-employed" position policy Government policy. It is not clear whether by "Gross" you mean turnover or drawdown. This aspect needs careful appraisal to establish the correct levels that do not discourage people with too high a hurdle.

people could start up then close down then re start businesses in new names to continuously avoid payment

**Q6 – Proposal 3 to reduce the capital limit**

you are working and saving sensibly and then penalised - better to allow savings to accrue so individuals have a cushion for when unable to work, accident, repairs etc

The Saving does not justify the change

The Council should not be implementing Gvt.cuts without protest

I think £6000 is too low - it could represent saving toward a mortgage £10k would be better.

This seems complicated and unfair as savings returns rates vary - I believe this could be unpopular on the basis that it is discouraging people from saving £6k is not a significant sum whereas £10k+ savings on this scheme idea seems a fairer figure

The £16,000 limit has not increased in over a decade. There is already a tariff income applied to savings over £6,000, perhaps this could be increased? Also, if the level is reduced to £6,000 then the few (59) households affected are likely to spend the savings they have on Council Tax and other rainy day items which would bring them below the limit and so would not result in the estimated savings being realised.

**Q8 -**

Increase parking fees all over the town

The Council should use all options available to it in the best interest of the Community

Council reserves should be set a a specific minimum and only interest gains should be used.

ill/disabled should not have to pay council tax they have enough extra expenses

as long as this process was only for 12mths

Social justice requires a balanced approach, mixing all three options.

To convince residents that further savings cannot be made, gross savings achieved over the last say 5yrs be published and by how much the Council Tax take has increased at the same time. i.e. extra income from development

make more effort collecting all money owed from previous years

**Q9 – Exceptional Hardship Fund**

but should ensure that Abuse of the Fund is avoided

Maybe this is where council reserves initially could be used and a plan to replenish this fund with a savings across the council services or a modest increase in Council Tax

As long as it is used fairly and responsibly

So long as it is clear with a decision making process & not just given to difficult customers

The fund would need to be considerably less than the savings amount, and there is the worry that people would expect long term help from the fund. Also, the fund may get exhausted early in the year and so might not be able to help those in need later on. It would need to be stressed that it is solely for exceptional hardship and that help cannot be relied upon. Administration of this fund needs to be taken in to consideration also as this will impact on the service.

Depends on the hardship - fed up with supporting people who can't be bothered working.

**Q 10 – Other options**

Charge more for car parking

More purpose built accommodation for social needs with low council tax/rent

Introduce a local tourist tax levied on non-local businesses like McDonalds, Starbucks etc

Put up business rates to larger firms

Profit making services run the Council like a private company

Ask pension age customers to pay more

The council should look carefully at where grants are given and to whom. Some of these appear to be frivolous and ill-considered causes or groups who benefit.

Options identified are sound

Look at reducing the DHP fund to those that repeat users and support the housing market, ie increase social housing homes, reduce rent so it is more affordable so housing benefit can be reduced with out dire circumstances

Unfortunately the most sensible option would be to remove the protection for pensioners, but the government won't allow this due to their lust for power and blatant disregard for actually addressing the issues of the economic situation. Perhaps free bus passes could be means tested by only being given to those pensioners who do not pay tax on income/savings?

Dedicated team to track and make those that have outstanding money owing pay it back

Collect what they are owed & stop giving benefits & reduced housing to those who are very able to work

Non discretionary services could increase their charges if they have any or the Council could reduce its subsidies for these services

Make them all pay!

**Q11 – any other comments**

Pension Age people should be asked to contribute more

I understand these are very difficult times for local authorities nationwide and that considerable savings have been made which has put pressure on maintaining service levels. Inevitable something has got to give, so the Council Tax Reduction scheme does need to be amended to realise some savings. It is such a shame that the government exclude certain people from this with the sole purpose of protecting their own interests and lust for power and not the greater good of the country as a whole. Until society as a whole is included in helping the economy recover it will continue to be an even longer process than is necessary.

Public sector workers should not have to face further cuts to services and be expected to give the same service to the public, some "non essential" works carried out in the town should be stopped and money given to services that are really needed

It should treat disabled people differently from non-disabled people as disabled people statistically find it harder to find work and their cost of living is often higher due to requiring essential adapted equipment etc.

Make it more difficult to claim!