

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18 Consultation Questionnaire

8 August - 2 October 2016
26 paper and 53 online responses = 79 total

Q1	I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	
	79 (100%)	Yes
	This question must be answered before you can continue.	

Paying for the Scheme

Q2	Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme? (Should it continue to administer the scheme and have the same level of support as it does at the moment?)	
	41 (52.6%)	Yes
	23 (29.5%)	No
	14 (17.9%)	Don't know

Q3	Please use the space below to make any comments you have on protecting the Council Tax Reduction Scheme from these changes:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A COUNCIL SHOULD PROTECT VULNERABLE PEOPLE 2) As a pensioner I would obviously prefer to keep the discount the same as it is at the moment but I do not want to be labelled as mean as long as the increase is reasonable. 3) Concentrate on lowering councillors expenses!! 4) Council should keep scheme as it is by either using savings or raising Council Tax. However some of the changes put forward result in no drawback for recipients of the scheme and could be implemented in order for the Council to make some savings. Questionnaire completed with this in mind. 5) Council Tax Reduction already penalises those on what was previously classed as the 'minimum' a person could live on per week excluding housing costs'. I know of people who currently struggle to pay their Council Tax Payments after the Council Tax Reduction is calculated. This is not an isolated case, many are really struggling, particularly with the 0% increase in benefits in the 2015/16 year. With the post 'Brexit' economy it is likely that the April 2016/17 benefit increases will be either nil again or only circa 1%. Any change to Council Tax Reduction will put people in even more poverty. 6) Efficient provision of services is the priority. This must not be done in isolation and all associated processes but be reviewed for waste. 7) Further reductions affect vulnerable groups of people and increase the risk of intervention needed by other council services-such as children's services 8) I am concerned that any change will be to reduce the discount thus making poorer families suffer. 9) If administering the scheme is so costly, then this is something that should be born by all residents, not just the less wealthy or the sick and disabled who are unable to work at all. This county is well run and has many more well off people than other counties, judging by the many large expensive houses. I believe the benefits system includes those who are chronically sick and disabled, not just those who are working and this could have a devastating effect on those people as well. 10) If the changes are due to the increase in population that is continuing to change Northallerton beyond recognition and bringing into the area more people needing this kind of support, why should the original inhabitants have to pay for this. You are penalising us twice.

Q3	continued ...
	<p>11) It is hard enough to manage now as a working single parent</p> <p>12) It is no sustainable long term.</p> <p>13) Not all working age people are able to work and any support we can give them to ensure that they have an acceptable standard of living should be done.</p> <p>14) Not being in work despite being working age is NOT ALWAYS A CHOICE. As a single parent, doing as much self-employed work from home as I possibly can I am also SOLE CARER for a child with a chronically ill, disabled child. I struggle financially. I receive NO HELP FROM THE COUNCIL for funded care provision for my child so working away from my home is not possible for me although very much desired. I receive only the 25% single adult occupant discount but I do recognise others may need the CT discount for genuine reasons. Perhaps segregate those who have genuine illness or carer roles as eligible as opposed to others who CHOOSE not to work although there are no other barriers to work? However if jobs are not available how can some who also, like me, wish to be in fulfilling employment if there is no job to be had?</p> <p>15) Only for pensioners</p> <p>16) People on low income need help to be able to stay in their homes</p> <p>17) The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, stop duplication of services by joining with neighbour councils and Councillors put there petty turf wars in storage.</p> <p>18) The system needs to be as efficient as possible - due to reducing resources across the council areas.</p> <p>19) There is a lot of people in this area on low income</p> <p>20) This is an important support to struggling families</p> <p>21) Those on a lower income should be protected</p> <p>22) Through my job I see many working age clients who are struggling with council tax arrears even at the current rate of CTR payment. To increase the level of payment would cause even more financial hardship.</p> <p>23) Ticked 'Yes' and 'No'. The whole 'scheme' proposed (like Council Tax generally) is deplorably totally UNFAIR and at a MINIMUM the existing meagre miserly scheme needs enhancing and extending</p> <p>24) To ensure there is a fair system for all taxpayers and non-taxpayers</p> <p>25) Your other alternatives (on the first page) are not desirable either. It seems the council is leaning to options 4 or 6 because of lack of drawbacks. This seems fair.</p>

Option 1 - Removing the Family Premium for all new working age applicants

Q4	Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	
	43 (55.1%)	Yes
	28 (35.9%)	No
	7 (9.0%)	Don't know

Q5	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<p>1) As a MINIMUM, introduce proper means testing - so that multiple incomes & from multiple residents occupancies are taken into account. Perhaps as an interim measure a few extra 'Bands' should be introduced. Also push the government into REVALUATION prior to totally reorganising council financing.</p> <p>2) Basically people should pay an equal amount of council tax for the benefits they receive.</p> <p>3) Cost efficiency</p> <p>4) Cutting help will increase the risk of families requiring more support elsewhere. Alternatives should be considered</p>

Q5	continued ...
	<p>5) If this only applies to NEW residents then they will be made aware of their position before buying a house in this area and have the option to buy elsewhere. Not sure if that is fair to either the area, which is building many new large family homes, if the buyers have resided here all their lives. It would also stop the amount of income for the council if people decide to live elsewhere. Will more residents contribute more to the local economy to more than offset the benefits system. Amongst all the proposals so far it seems to me that we should still protect the low paid, in order to help keep our residents well cared for. This does not take into account the massive costs of childcare or the distances rural areas residents have to travel for work and services such as certain health problems to name just two.</p> <p>6) It may mean that those families on low income but striving to stay off general benefits will not be able to offer their children extra-curricular activities eg sport club fees, cubs fees etc. Those children with such experiences outside school tend to have better educational achievements and will become independent, tax paying citizens of the future.</p> <p>7) It should not go on someone's income, it should be the same for everyone whether you earn more or not as its feeding into the 'do less get more' system like benefits</p> <p>8) Keep the system used now.</p> <p>9) Leave the scheme as it is.</p> <p>10) Maintain existing arrangement.</p> <p>11) n/a (live alone)</p> <p>12) No costs or number of claimants shown so not possible to give an alternative Is current cost significant?</p> <p>13) Options 4 or 6</p> <p>14) Raising Council Tax overall. Under the proposed changes the worst off households are yet again hit hardest.</p> <p>15) REDUCE EMPTYING OF RECYCLE BIN TO ONCE EVERY TWO WEEKS, ENCOURAGE NEIGHBOURS TO SHARE BINS</p> <p>16) See answer above i.e. I would prefer to keep the discount as it is if possible</p> <p>17) Sell the prison</p> <p>18) The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, stop duplication of services by joining with neighbour councils and Councillors put there petty turf wars in storage. Stop wasting money on silly plans to change anything, there are obvious favourite pork fat schemes. Bin them.</p> <p>19) This option will make it more difficult for recipients to cope financially on a clearly already stretched budget, with the knock on effect of bad nutrition, ill health, low morale etc. which just raises costs in other areas of the public budget. Use savings or raise Council Tax to cover the extra cost.</p> <p>20) Use reserves</p> <p>21) Again, with the nil benefits increase in April 2016 and a predicted very low increase in April 2017, it will put the poorest in Hambleton in even more dire circumstances.</p>

Option 2 - Reducing Backdating to one month

Q6	Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	
	54 (68.4%)	Yes
	16 (20.3%)	No
	9 (11.4%)	Don't know

Q7	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Another sign of the Government penalising those who for whatever reason were unable to claim. 2) Backdating is fine so long as a legitimate reason for it. If entitled, should not miss out because of having not applied. 3) Does this not penalise the most vulnerable - those not able to apply themselves, in hospital or awaiting third party help eg social services which may take a long time 4) I don't like it and there should always be discretionary circumstances where this can be overridden. Many people have genuine reasons for not claiming on time. But as costs have to be cut this would be a better option than reducing still further the help low income families get with Council Tax. 5) I sort of agree with this but feel there must be some "exception" to the rule for genuine cases that could not apply within the one month limit. 6) I think a 2 to 3 month claim period is necessary. When life circumstances take a negative step the stress it causes throughout a family can mean you are not able to understand, access, process the benefit system that we are fortunate to have in the UK to protect genuine adversity. Appointments for advice are not available within days or often weeks so the correct advice can take more than the month period you are proposing. 7) I think it would be fair for the proposed applicants, but an 'exceptional circumstances' clause should be included in order to help genuine 8) Leave well alone. If it ain't broke don't fix it. 9) Maintain existing scheme. 10) Need to know cost of not changing. Possible low overall cost but large impact on a few claimants 11) Options 4 or 6 12) Perhaps bring this in to effect by increments. ie in the first year reduce the back claims to 3 months then in the following financial year introduce the 1 month limit. This will seek to mitigate people falling foul of the system by ignorance if it is adequately publicised. 13) See answer in Q5 (See answer above i.e. I would prefer to keep the discount as it is if possible) 14) The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, aligning a scheme is a way of just avoiding the Council's responsibilities. Sorry but it's a scrounge mentality and compassion is cut as well.... guess that's a Cameron ism for the big society. 15) This option does not mean anyone already in receipt of this element of the scheme will lose money, so could be introduced without being detrimental to the position of those already in receipt. Savings could be made if this option were to be introduced. 16) Three months 17) You don't have to slavishly follow this evil Tory Govt even if you are a matching L.A. - which probably fed Thatcher, Major, Blair etc. with 'useful' prejudices ?? as to how to cut taxes - and 'crucify' the POOR. Perhaps Hammond/May may be not so nasty - but they avidly follow the electors prejudices and greed.

Option 3 - Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks

Q8	Do you agree with the change to the temporary absence rule?	
	62 (80.5%)	Yes
	7 (9.1%)	No
	8 (10.4%)	Don't know

Q9	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<p>1) 4 weeks seems a very short period of time for someone to lose their benefits for being out of the country. While they are out of the country they are not using the services provided by Council Tax, and it is not known how long it would take for the benefit to be reinstated on their return. Four weeks is not long enough for someone, if they leave the country for job-seeking purposes, to get securely established in the new situation, or if someone has relatives abroad who become ill and they go to support them, it could take longer than four weeks. In both cases the recipient would then be in a less secure financial situation on their return than when they left and it could deter them from making a necessary trip out of the country. For this reason I think the period should stay at 13 weeks.</p> <p>2) Council Tax.</p> <p>3) If you can afford to be out of the country you are not available for work within the UK or to attend interviews so that is actively not engaging with the employment process. On return to the UK either the benefit can be reinstated WITHOUT back pay or a delay in reapplication process eligibility. Those leaving the country are either able to afford an overseas holiday (in which case they do not need benefits!!) or they have alternative homes that they are able to fund or reside in and are therefore not struggling and no requiring welfare support in the UK.</p> <p>4) If you can afford to go on holiday you can afford your council tax</p> <p>5) It should stay the same. If for some reason say an extended holiday to visit relatives or care for a relative then that person is penalised through no fault of their own</p> <p>6) Maintain the existing rule.</p> <p>7) More of the same, cut the poor whenever you can, Do not change a thing, The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, stop duplication of services by joining with neighbour councils and Councillors put there petty turf wars in storage. Stop wasting money on silly plans to change anything, there are obvious favourite pork fat schemes. Bin them.</p> <p>8) More trite and trivial nit picking. So no 'alien' magnanimity or social justice from any supporters of the existing evil regime.</p> <p>9) Not planning to go abroad. 77 in August. Another 20 years would be welcome - but highly unlikely.</p> <p>10) Options 4 or 6</p> <p>11) See answer in Q5 (See answer above i.e. I would prefer to keep the discount as it is if possible)</p>

Option 4 - To remove the element of a Work Related Activity Component in the calculation of the current scheme for new Employment and Support Allowance applicants.

Q10	Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	
	60 (76.9%)	Yes
	9 (11.5%)	No
	9 (11.5%)	Don't know

Q11	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Again, xxxx the poor The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, stop duplication of services by joining with neighbour councils and Councillors put there petty turf wars in storage. Stop wasting money on silly plans to change anything, there are obvious favourite pork fat schemes. Bin them. 2) Allow claimants to continue to receive FULL ?? of Council Tax demands and to continue to receive full Housing Benefit (which is still bloody meagre!) 3) As they are not receiving full wages 4) I don't understand what the Work Related Activity Group actually means or involves. 5) It is fundamentally flawed system that reduces those in the WRAG will in future receive the same as those on JSA etc. Council Tax Reduction changes will cause those in Hambleton and already on the breadline to struggle even more. 6) See answer in Q5 (See answer above i.e. I would prefer to keep the discount as it is if possible) 7) There appear to be no reductions experienced by existing recipients with this option.

Option 5 - To limit the number of dependent children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two

Q12	Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	
	57 (73.1%)	Yes
	13 (16.7%)	No
	8 (10.3%)	Don't know

Q13	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As they are still in education. 2) Do not see why larger families should be penalised so leave well alone. 3) Even China changed their minds on one child per family did not the Mao was on the council 4) It is all very academic - put up the Council Tax (pro temp) and campaign for a much fairer system of funding Local Government as if Hammond continues fuehrer Osborne's evil rostrum of funding all Local Expand from each L.A.; there will be mega trouble and injustice!!! 5) Its limiting the size of a family. Why stop at 3 ? why not penalise those with 2 or even 1 child ? 6) Maintain the existing arrangement. 7) Options 4 or 6 8) The number of children should be increased to 3. This is not an unusual size for an ordinary family and restricting the number to two penalises families for being at the lower end of the earning spectrum - many of the recipients of benefit are in work but earning a low wage. 9) We cannot penalise children & push families with children further into poverty. 10) Yes - provided exemptions outlined above are kept & not gradually phased out.

Option 6 – To remove entitlement to the Severe Disability Premium where another person is paid Universal Credit (Carers Element) to look after them

Q14	Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	
	59 (76.6%)	Yes
	9 (11.7%)	No
	9 (11.7%)	Don't know

Q15	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<p>1) Are those receiving carers allowance for looking after a family member disadvantaged by this rule? I have no alternative but to provide full care for my teenager who through illness cannot attend school for education and I receive no council provision for care for her to enable me to leave her at home safely whilst I go out to work (therefore I do low paid self-employed work from home) to earn a better wage. £60 per week carers allowance does not equate to a salary I could earn if out working 35 hours per week. I am therefore 'paid' under 50 pence per hour to provide the care that she needs - somewhat below the minimum wage!</p> <p>2) No draw back !!! funny I don't believe you, why make a change then ?? The council should stop picking on the easy undefended targets, stop duplication of services by joining with neighbour councils and Councillors put there petty turf wars in storage. Stop wasting money on silly plans to change anything, there are obvious favourite pork fat schemes. Bin them.</p> <p>3) See answer in Q5 (See answer above i.e. I would prefer to keep the discount as it is if possible)</p> <p>4) This option would appear to save the Council money without being detrimental to recipients.</p> <p>5) This seems to assume that carers will not be cut back and the benefit system cuts will not increase either. I think we need more clarification on whether 'Care' for the severely disabled is going to increase with the ever ageing population from chronic illnesses. Anyone young and severely disabled and has a carer now may lose that carer due to the cut backs and shortages. It worries me that hospital closures are costing more and more in travel and usually carers are the ones who do the driving for these people.</p> <p>6) You need a degree in Social Science to work out most of the fiscal garbage proposed in this document. I am against the changes because HDC would not progress (to fall in line with the Tory Masters in London) if it wasn't all for cuts in expenditure.</p>

Option 7 - Using a set income for self-employed earners after one year's self-employment

Q16	Do you agree with the principle that applicants who are self-employed for more than one year should have a minimum income floor applied to their claim?	
	47 (60.3%)	Yes
	22 (28.2%)	No
	9 (11.5%)	Don't know

Q17	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Again a person trying to earn a living is penalised. It should remain the same. 2) Again I do not believe and your assumptions are usually wrong and cause hardship 3) Continue to take actual income into account. 4) If your self-employed then you don't earn a minimum of 'living wage'. A good example of this is a childminder who may work 50 hours a week but at a fee of £4 per hour per child they wouldn't be eligible therefore better off financially not working at all and claiming benefits 5) It will make self-employed people who have a period of poor trade suffer disproportionately. 6) Options 4 or 6 7) Our entrepreneurs are the people to encourage to expand, but if only given 1 year this is not long enough to even provide a profit or get the business up and running well enough to expand. Any business owners, especially new business owners will tell you that it takes more than 1 year to assess how a business will do in future years. The time period should be long enough to show that the business is capable of expanding after several years of good profits, not just a minimum living wage. Without profit no business can expand and there are many other pitfalls to consider in running a small business e.g. bank lending rates, business rates going up, petrol prices etc. 8) people work different hours for all sorts of reasons and it's unfair to penalise them for this - you may get cases where it doesn't 'pay to work' and has the opposite effect with these businesses ceasing. 9) Same again - put up the CT - until it is totally changed to something much fairer. Judging by the number of adverts from the ?? self-employed there just isn't the work needed to be done and paid for at exorbitant rates (they try to charge) & of course dodge ALL tax responsibly 10) Self-employed can include van delivery men who cannot get regular 35 hours work. 11) Self-employed people are renowned for their fantasy accounts and undeclared income. this proposal would encourage under-reporting. be more rigorous on assessing "self-employed" declarations. 12) Self-employment wages can fluctuate and the early years of small losses (and needing the support) could lead to the person being much more stable long term. Don't discourage them! 13) This will penalise self-employed people who even with their best efforts do not after one year earn up to the National Living Wage. This could result in them giving up their self-employed status and returning onto the unemployment register. They presumably have to produce figures to show how much above the National Living Wage they have earned. If these figures show they have not earned the National Living Wage then they should receive benefit accordingly. 14) To look at the circumstance. As a carer I CANNOT earn the minimum living wage. Previous to being a carer my work was as a Childminder. The most parents in this area will pay is £4 per hour for their child care and even the governments proposed 3-4 year old funding is barely above £5 per hour per child. This pay is BEFORE considerable expenses. It is not always possible to care for multiple children, for example if you care for a disabled child like I previously agreed to do I was disadvantaged financially as the maximum number of children I could care for was 2 children due to the care one of them needed. 15) You should use what they earn. If it is in the first year, an estimate should be applied and then after one year a check should be done to see if they owe the Council money or vice versa

Option 8 – To introduce a scheme, in addition to Council Tax Reduction, to help applicants suffering exceptional hardship

Q18	Do you agree with the introduction of a targeted protection scheme based on Exceptional Hardship?	
	58 (76.3%)	Yes
	12 (15.8%)	No
	6 (7.9%)	Don't know

Q19	If you disagree, what alternative would you propose?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As long as the targets are set at reasonable levels. 2) I don't think that there is an alternative. I don't think that there should be a hardship allowance unless administered by the DWP. 3) If we look after those at the bottom end of the pay scale and those who are struggling with health etc before they get into severe hardship, we wouldn't have severe hardship at all. 4) In all the guff you have something of value but I will believe it when I see it. 5) it could be subjective, or no guarantee to help those with the greatest need. I it not better not to put them in that position to start with by protecting their benefit if possible such as the back dated benefit? 6) Options 4 or 6 7) There should be no exceptions to payments once all other avenues have been exhausted. 8) This could handle cases outlined under Option 7 previously as well as providing a flexibility taking into account individual circumstances. 9) Ticked 'Yes' and 'No'. It's a nasty throwback to Victorian ?? with the concept of 'Deserving Poor' & the rest (to be punished mercilessly). In 1909 Stepney Council revolted against being forced to fund unaided the destitute who filled their borough. 10) Use current system

Alternatives to reducing the amount of help provided by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Q20	Do you think we should choose any of the following options rather than the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding.			
		Yes	No	Don't know
	Increase the level of Council Tax	16 (22.2%)	51 (70.8%)	5 (6.9%)
	Find savings from cutting other Council Services	21 (29.2%)	42 (58.3%)	9 (12.5%)
	Use the Council's savings	33 (48.5%)	25 (36.8%)	10 (14.7%)

Q21	If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference? Please rank in order of preference, where 1 is the option that you would most prefer and 3 is the least.			
		1	2	3
	Increase the level of Council Tax	15 (20.5%)	16 (21.9%)	42 (57.5%)
	Reduce funding available for other Council Services	21 (28.8%)	28 (38.4%)	24 (32.9%)
	Use the Council's savings	40 (56.3%)	19 (26.8%)	12 (16.9%)

Q22	Please use this space to make any other comments on the scheme:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I have concerns that people at the lower end of the scale may be pushed further into financial, followed by the related health, problems. Once people get into difficulties, through no fault of their own e.g. the cancer rate now standing at almost half the population, then not only is the NHS finding cut backs but all services are, which helps no one. If we take care of the vulnerable then they will thrive and be able to make more of a contribution to society as a whole. There is no information, that I can see which would offer the alternative of recruiting schemes into voluntary gardening or decorating etc for those who need a little help from time to time. Some of the voluntary services are very good and vital. I think more schemes should be considered and people could pay at a reduced level according to their circumstances. The Car Scheme for essential travel to hospital is very good and more volunteers of this and it's scheme type would relieve the burden for elderly people. It also provides much needed contact for the isolated and lonely. 2) If Council savings are to be used to help people with their council tax then it should be done in cases of financial hardship. 3) My perception is that cuts are being made without reviewing how efficiently things are being done. This is a false economy - savings are better made with reviewing and re-tendering. 4) Please make the scheme as efficient and cost effective as possible. 5) Prison site ideas are daft, why did you buy it? 6) reduce council spending should look at all possibilities, such as salaries and pensions of staff, not just services to the people who pay for those services and salaries through their council tax. take a hard look at real priorities rather than pet projects 7) Reduction of funding and cutting of servicing should be avoided wherever possible as should the dipping into the savings. If this is done in either case too much it will react badly for the local people and their lives. 8) The tenor of the options put forward appears to be to save money for the Council and thus those paying Council Tax by penalising those in receipt of benefit. They are the least able to cope with this. I feel we should not always be trying to save money for those who are in better financial circumstances to the detriment of those less fortunate - using the Council's savings or increasing Council Tax would enable the less fortunate not to be penalised by the introduction of this scheme. 9) The wording throughout this survey and the accompanying information has been biased and suggestive that those with good incomes are 'subsidising' others who can't be bothered to work. I know MANY families, previously financially self-supporting who have been made redundant and are now struggling to make basic ends meet. Such people are travelling up and down the country to interview after interview, unsuccessfully and are desperate to work again. 10) Words now fail me at the presumptions and assumptions behind this barrage of nit-picking questions to the ?? of this RICH ?? 11) You said 3 was least so I put that as I don't understand

Q23	Please use the space below if you would like the Council to consider any other options:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As the population increases in this area, I would like to see more encouragement for businesses to open and provide more local work for the residents. This would cut travel, costs, advance the areas prospects of visitors to spend more and provide much needed income into the area. I know this has been proposed, but feel it needs to be highlighted more, as shops with local produce, be it food or crafts or shops which draw visitors in will provide 'interest and raise awareness of these products' as well as the large local and national companies who are always there for the 'whole' end of the market. 2) As we are both pensioners living in a Broadacres housing, why must we pay the same in Council Tax as non-pensioners? 3) Council Tax should be based on income related means but part-time and self-employed could be gauged on per monthly as 0-hours contracts are still apparent. 4) Cut overheads to save money 5) Ensure that Council Tax is collected efficiently and effectively from all households. That is, that households actually pay their dues, so we are maximising income. Defaulters should be prosecuted. 6) For those who have paid into the State via taxes in previous employment support them through benefits. For those who have never paid into the State taxes offer them meaningful part time voluntary work and then enable them to access benefits. For those on long term unemployment regardless of previous education levels offer them free meaningful college training so they can restart in a new area of employment. The need to pay your mortgage, insurances, food, basic living costs can stop you being able to attend college again to reskill (a college course fee loan doesn't pay for your basic life running costs) so people cannot afford to reskill and start a new career when doors close in their old job. 7) I believe Council Tax should be paid by all who enjoy the benefit. Council Tax fraud should be more vigorously interrogated so honest taxpayers are not put at disadvantage. 8) If the council can obtain the money in any other way or ways e.g. government or from any other gift or award etc. this should be considered wherever possible. 9) People should be offered free and impartial advice on budgeting and managing money. 10) Resign en-masse and let's have a fair election without the barrage of the Tory Propaganda & AID from Tories in Parliament just to get ONE WOMAN elected in a recent by-election enabling the 'One Party Freedom' to continue with no 'checks' & opposition. 11) The value for money is already poor, you charge big yet Nthn is a dump 12) What is the expected cost of the change .Needs to be stated otherwise any opinion survey is worthless

Q24	If you have any further comments or questions to make regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme that you haven't had opportunity to raise elsewhere, please use the space below:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Amalgamation with other services 2) I think I've raised them all (& more). I think North Yorks would be better served WITHOUT District Council some (like Selby) should be transferred to York (also Tadcaster) and Stokesley & Yarm to Stockton leaving a contracted area round Northallerton as a unitary authority. A BIG weakness in the Council Tax is that no note was taken of the number of people 'in work' in the property. 3) Make the current assessment scheme easier to understand, such as the working tax credit calculator. 4) the questionnaire seems somewhat biased - all questions and possible responses are along the lines of "do you are with our wonderful cost saving proposal, our do you want bad things to happen" - i suspect the alternatives are not as stark or as binary as they are portrayed. As mentioned above, why do you only "offer" reduction in services and not a reduction in council staff numbers or benefits ? 5) the tenant shouldn't lose their 25% discount when their son/daughter return from uni in the holidays then have to reapply it brings on more hardship when they return when the loan parent has to support them when they return eg another mouth to feed more elec and gas used then extra council tax to pay 6) There is no mention of increases such as green waste collection and planned charges. It is the added costs of something like this that makes a cumulative cost that and insurances, proposed bank closures, petrol prices etc at the moment exceeds wages and pensions. All these rises with extremely low interest rates are impacting very heavily on us all. I think this council do a very good job and I'm proud to live here so I would like to see us value all our residents and our public services, hospitals etc staying strong through hard times. Thank you 7) We do not get a lot out of the council tax money we pay now so it would not be fair to increase it. 8) Whichever you pick, please consider those on low incomes. For those earning only the equivalent of Jobseeker's Allowance, it is necessary to watch all spending and costs. Also: sorry about the crossings out. Thank you.

About You

Q25	Are you, or someone in your household, getting a Council Tax Reduction at this time?	
	28 (35.9%)	<i>Yes</i>
	49 (63.8%)	<i>No</i>
	1 (1.3%)	<i>Don't know/not sure</i>

Q26	What is your gender?	
	29 (38.2%)	<i>Male</i>
	46 (60.5%)	<i>Female</i>
	1 (1.3%)	<i>Prefer not to say</i>

Q27	What is your age?					
	0 (0.0%)	<i>18-24 yrs</i>	3 (3.9%)	<i>25-34 yrs</i>	10 (13.2%)	<i>35-44 yrs</i>
	22 (28.9%)	<i>45-54 yrs</i>	15 (19.7%)	<i>55-64 yrs</i>	16 (21.1%)	<i>65-74 yrs</i>
	7 (9.2%)	<i>75-84 yrs</i>	2 (2.6%)	<i>85+ yrs</i>	1 (1.3%)	<i>Prefer not to say</i>

Q28	Disability: Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?	
	19 (25.3%)	Yes
	52 (69.3%)	No
	2 (2.7%)	<i>Don't know/not sure</i>
	2 (2.7%)	<i>Prefer not to say</i>

Q29	Are you responding to this consultation in your capacity as a representative of any of the following:		
		Yes	No
	Housing Association	2 (3.3%)	58 (96.7%)
	Landlord	1 (1.7%)	57 (98.3%)
	Voluntary Organisation	2 (3.3%)	59 (96.7%)
	Other	6 (10.7%)	50 (89.3%)
	Please state the name below:		
	1) Council Tax payer 2) CTR claimant 3) General member of the public 4) general resident of HDC 5) Geoffrey Brooke 6) Householder 7) Householder 8) Pensioner		