

Appendix B: West Suffolk Council Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024-25

Equality screening form

<p>Step 1: The changes being proposed What changes are being proposed? For example, in policy, service, charging, location.</p> <p>Changes to the West Suffolk Council Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024-25. The four proposed changes are as follows:</p> <p>Proposal 1 It is proposed that West Suffolk Council consults on a proposal to continue the 2023-24 changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme that would extend the decreased contribution rate (maximum discount of 100 per cent) to support low-income households and those facing financial hardship, in light of the cost-of-living crisis.</p>	
<p>Step 1a. Who will the changes have an impact on in general? (For example, taxi drivers, customers, staff, owners of businesses) List the groups:</p>	<p>Step 1b. What changes will each of the groups listed experience? Impacts on specific groups:</p>
Existing recipients of LCTRS	The average financial gain for these recipients will be £103.32 over a year.
Council tax payers not currently in receipt of LCTRS	No impact
Anglia Revenues Partnership staff	None
Carers and advocates of recipients of LCTRS	These proposed changes do not affect this group specifically; however, they may indirectly benefit as those they care/advocate for will benefit.
Voluntary sector organisations providing advice and advocacy services	No direct impact.

<p>Step 2: Impacts on specific groups</p>	
<p>Step 2a. Within any of the groups you listed in Step 1, is there a higher proportion of people with a protected characteristic (see list below) that the populations of West Suffolk as a whole? (For example, users of Shopmobility are more likely to have a disability than the West Suffolk population) Describe how representation within the group affected differs from the</p>	<p>Step 2b. Are there any elements of the decision or changes that will impact differently on people with a protected characteristic? (For example, people in rural areas with poor broadband may find it harder to access services if moved online.) Describe how the change will impact differently on different groups, positively and negatively.</p>

West Suffolk population (use data if possible)	
<p>Recipients of LCTRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability <p>A greater proportion of disabled people are likely to receive council tax discount than non-disabled people, therefore the chances that the changes will negatively impact this group are higher.</p> <p>(Evidence sources: In 2016, the proportion of people without a disability in work was 79.9% and with a disability in work was 46.9%. This is a statistically significant difference. Department for Work and Pensions Equality Information (Customer Data) 2016 (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>In 2018, median pay was consistently higher for non-disabled employees than for disabled employees; in 2018, median pay for non-disabled employees was £12.11 an hour whilst for disabled employees it was £10.63 an hour, resulting in a pay gap of 12.2% Disability pay gaps in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)</p>	<p>The proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme will positively impact on disabled LCTRS recipients.</p> <p>There were two comments relating to this protected characteristic received during the consultation.</p> <p>“No, we've just got to help the poorest and most vulnerable as a priority.”</p> <p>“I suggest that West Suffolk Council continues the 2023-24 changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age customers that would extend the decreased contribution rate (maximum discount of 100 per cent) to support low-income households and those facing financial hardship, in light of the cost-of-living crisis.”</p> <p>No mitigation is required as LCTRS is a means-tested benefit.</p>
<p>Recipients of LCTRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age <p>The proposed changes only affect working age customers.</p>	<p>One comment was received on this protected characteristic during the consultation.</p> <p>“Yes, I'm a widower of 78 but still pay £116 a month? On ST OLAVES ROAD ALLDAY ITS HEAVY TRAFFIC AND LARGE LORRYS GOING PAST OUR DOOR WE SHOULD GET A DISCOUNT ??”</p> <p>No mitigation is required as LCTRS is a means-tested benefit.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity:</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>

<p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	
<p>Race:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Religion or belief:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Sex:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation:</p> <p>No evidence that the population in receipt of LCTRS has higher representation from individuals with protected characteristics under this strand.</p>	<p>No differential impact.</p>
<p>Deprivation/Socioeconomic Disadvantage:</p> <p>A greater proportion of people on low incomes will receive council tax discount, therefore the chances that the changes will negatively impact this group are higher.</p>	<p>The proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme will positively impact on those experiencing deprivation and socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>There were three comments relating to this protected characteristic received during the consultation.</p> <p>"At Citizens Advice, we are speaking with increasingly more people that are generally struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Extra help with council tax frees up money for essentials such as</p>

	<p>food and energy for those clients on a low income.”</p> <p>“It is important to maintain support for those worst affected by the cost-of-living crisis.”</p> <p>“Not renewing will impact poorer people.”</p>
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Step 3: Adjustments to the proposals	
<p>Step 3a. What are the views of the changes from those who are affected by them and what (if any) amendments would they like to see? Please note this engagement should precede formal consultation. For example, what do charities think of proposed changes to business rates relief?</p> <p>Record any feedback on the proposals that has been gathered</p>	<p>Step 3b. Based on the feedback from 3a, can we alter the proposed changes so that the negative impacts are removed or reduced and the positive impacts maximised? For example, adjust eligibility criteria to exclude small charities from changes.</p> <p>What changes could be made to the proposals? If none, say why not.</p> <p>How can we ensure the proposals are communicated effectively to those affected?</p>
Appendix A to Cabinet paper which gives details of feedback received	No changes required
All consultations were conducted formally but included stakeholders and customers.	Effective communication of all of the changes will be required, including through the groups contacted as part of the consultation exercise.

West Suffolk Council is committed to assessing the impact of our proposals on those with a protected characteristic (that is age, disability, sex, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion, sexual orientation and gender re-assignment, as well as on families and those with caring responsibilities, people on low income, people suffering rural isolation and those for whom English is not their first language).