

## Council Tax Reduction Scheme

### 2022/23 Consultation Results

The consultation process began on 1 October 2021 and finished on 24 December 2021 (12 weeks). There were 819 respondents.

	Yes	No	Don't know
Q1. I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme: This question must be answered before you continue.	99.21%	0.79%	N/A
<b>Changing the Scheme</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
2. Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction scheme? (Should it continue to administer the scheme as it does at the moment?)	38.33%	27.13%	34.54%
3. Please use the space below to make any comments you have on keeping the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in its current format.	167 comments		
<b>Options for Change</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
4. Increase the level of Council Tax to cover the rising administration costs?	12.25%	77.91%	9.84%
5. Find the additional administration costs by cutting other Council Services?	29.72%	55.42%	14.86%
<b>Part 1 – The introduction of an Income Grid scheme to replace the current scheme for all applicants of working age</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
6. Do you agree with introducing an income-based banded discount scheme?	67.06%	15.88%	17.06%
7. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	59 comments		
<b>Part 2 - To limit the number of dependant children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two for all applicants</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
8. Do you agree with this change to the scheme	68.08%	12.97%	18.95%
9. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	48 comments		
<b>Part 3 – To set 'flat rate' non-dependant deductions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
10. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	64.18%	12.63%	23.19%
11. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	43 comments		
<b>Part 4 – Disregarding the housing element of Universal Credit</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
12. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	66.41%	10.94%	22.65%
13. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	40 comments		
<b>Part 5 – Removing the current earnings disregards and replacing them with a standard £25 per week disregard for all working applicants</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
14. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	64.71%	12.30%	22.99%
15. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	35 comments		

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<b>Part 6 - To introduce a Minimum Income Floor for self-employed applicants</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
16. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	55.53%	15.09%	29.38%
17. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	44 comments		
<b>Part 7 – Removing the Extended Payment provision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
18. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	60.87%	17.66%	21.47%
19. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	47 comments		
<b>Part 8 – Any new claim or change in circumstances which changes Council Tax Reduction entitlement will be made from the date on which the change occurs, (rather than on a weekly basis as at present)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
20. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	79.67%	5.77%	14.56%
21. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	11 comments		
<b>Part 9 – Extending the backdating provisions within the scheme</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
22. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	79.55%	6.91%	13.54%
23. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	20 comments		
<b>Part 10 – Protecting disabled persons by disregarding Personal Independence Payments or Disability Living Allowance and providing a further disregard of £40 per week where the applicant, partner or dependant is in receipt of the disability benefit.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
24. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	81.16%	5.82%	13.02%
25. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	26 comments		
<b>Part 11 – Disregarding Carer's Allowance and the Support Component of the Employment and Support Allowance</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
26. Do you agree with this change to the scheme?	76.26%	10.61%	13.13%
27. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	25 comments		
<b>Part 12 – Continuing to protect War Pensioners by disregarding War Pensions or War Disablement pensions in full and by enabling up to 100% support to be granted in some cases</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
28. Do you agree with this proposal?	79.83%	7.28%	12.89%
29. If you disagree, please explain why and what alternative would you propose?	19 comments		
<b>Alternatives to changing the Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b>			
30. Please use this space to make any other comments on the proposed scheme	94 comments		
31. Please use the space below if you would like the Council to consider any other options (please state)	44 comments		

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32. 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.	44 comments		
<b>About You</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
33. Are you completing this form on behalf of an organisation or group?	2.58%	97.42%	
<b>Questions for Individuals</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
34. Do you live in Medway?	100.00%	0.00%	
35. Are you currently receiving Council Tax Reduction?	61.24%	38.76%	
36. Are you or your partner in work or self-employed?	32.74%	67.26%	
37. Are you liable to pay Council Tax?	94.07%	5.93%	
38. Do you have more than three pre-school or school age children in your household?	2.93%	97.07%	
39. Are you currently serving in the Armed Forces?	0.00%	100.00%	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Prefer not to say</b>
40. What is your sex?	46.61%	46.61%	6.78%
	<b>Age</b>	<b>%</b>	
41. What is your age?	18-24	0.29%	
	25-34	6.47%	
	35-44	10.88%	
	45-54	22.65%	
	55-64	28.82%	
	65-74	14.71%	
	75-84	9.41%	
	85+	1.76%	
	Prefer not to say	5.00%	
	<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	
42. 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?	Yes	39.58%	
	No	52.38%	
	Don't know	2.38%	
	Prefer not to say	5.65%	

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	Response	%
43. Ethnic Origin: What is your ethnic group?	Prefer not to say	7.69%
	White British	80.18%
	White Irish	0.00%
	White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%
	Any other White background	4.14%
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups – White & Black African	0.00%
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups – White & Black Caribbean	0.89%
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups – White & Asian	0.30%
	Any other multi mixed background	0.59%
	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0.59%
	Asian or Asian British - Indian	2.07%
	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.89%
	Asian or Asian British - Chinese	0.00%
	Any other Asian background	0.30%
	Black African	0.89%
	Black Caribbean	0.59%
	Black British	0.89%
	Any other Black background	0.30%

### COMMENTS from respondents to Public Consultation

**Question3. Please use the space below to make any comments you have on keeping the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in its current format. (167 comments)**

1 Because it helps with disabled very much

2 I think the council needs to make it a lot clearer on what help people can get. I am disabled and get pip but my husband works 4.5 nights a week and I still have to pay £114 a month council tax as I don't know what help is available to me

3 It is very confusing and impossible to work out whether it is correct.

4 It ignores single occupancy households. Even with the 25% discount, a personal living alone in a house still has to meet 75% of the bill on a single income whereas those in a multi occupancy, multi income household - for instance two working adults & two working offspring, lodgers etc - are effectively only charged 25%. This is a shocking inequality.

5 The current scheme means a large proportion of those who cannot work for whatever reason have hardly any money from their benefits

6 Will single households still be eligible for 25% discount

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7 Disabled and Carers need protecting as should Single person claimants who live in a Social Housing property
8 I don't think it's broken, so why fix it?
9 I just think its a good idea.
10 I would like to answer this after reading the proposed changes.
11 no coment
12 The situation seems fluid
13 lam fine it hard to pay as it is anymore payments in the amount every month I will not be able to pay if any thing u could extend to 12 months a year and lower the cost of tax
14 you get a 25 percent if you are living on your own, it should be 75 percent, [fact] i can afford 5 pounds per month
15 But I feel the working class should get a Reduction Scheme as Most Council Tenants who are on dss or other benefits should have no problems paying Council Tax monthly even if they had a Council Tax Reduction.
16 There is no real understanding as to why the current system is broken, does not feel properly explained. Would be concerned about bringing new schemes in and the difficulties that come with that, it is never easy and although it aims to reduce admin could easily increase
17 Unless the changes to the way Council Tax reductions are made are simple to follow. please do not maove to something that is more incomprehensible.
18 I receive a discount as I am a lone parent and also as I am on Employment Support Allowance and it is a fair scheme.
19 Reduce council tax for elderly pensioners.
20 I am a carer for my husband who has Parkinsons Disease and we are claiming universal credit and struggle with paying our council tax even after the mjinor reductions you make.
21 It is a very useful reduction scheme
22 After reading the notes above, the current scheme spends much more in admin. charges.
23 Poor people can't afford it
24 Being on UC and paying 25% i don't think this should change, as it will benefit me to keep to keep it as it is.
25 It is a very complicated system at present. But the new system doesn't seem any less complicated..and how would it be more cost effective with new system
26 A few people like myself have health problems and due to the pandemic was unable to go back to work yet The council should look at the majority of people s income and how much they can afford to pay I have always tried to pay the council tax
27 On benefits so need help.
28 It's good as it is
29 Change in some cases are needed but surely there is a considerable amount of information and the schedule is in place so why change .Also the cost involved.
30 If the current reduction scheme can't continue without increased costs then alternatives have to be explored. I'm assuming that any ways of reducing costs to the current scheme have been explored, including best use of staff time, systems, council buildings and staff working from home.
31 More money needs to be used for elderly and social service
32 Make it easier to apply for disabled residents
33 I have read the above but don't understand enough to make a decent/fair judgement.
34 Not sure what means
35 Should does more reduction for families whom they are on low income or one of parent is not able for work due to health situation.
36 It used to be that if you were on benefits you paid a minimal amount of council tax. I am currently unemployed and have i pay£150 a month.
37 I always found it confusing not very clear how the reduction is applied but nonetheless it worked

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38 If it's not broken don't fix it
39 As pensioners we have a fixed income
40 I don't think it's fair. A person when part of a couple who has worked and bought their own home and now at the age of 50+ finds themselves single in that nice home that they worked hard to pay for but cannot get any help with their council tax, apart from the 25% discount even though they earn a low wage because they own their own home. A person who rents the same home in the same area in the same circumstances would get a further reduction. This suggests that such a person is being penalised for working to be able to afford to live in a nice home or area with a higher band.
41 It does seem a fair way of working it out
42 Keep the scheme as it is as it works to help vulnerable residents
43 The key issue here is that CT is very poor value for money in Medway. These small changes will do nothing to change this fact and Medway council turn its attention to the real issue.
44 Please Keep it The Same Reduction Scheme!
45 council tax is a big burden on people who are unemployed , my daughter is on universal credit , she has a little cleaning job , which for each pound she earns they take away in benefit, she has just recently ended a relationship, now as a single person is hoping for a reduction in council tax, but seems not entitled to single person as she has a dyslectic son living at her home , he is an alcoholic ,solely dependant on his mother , but does have universal credit . what reduction should she receive, ??in council tax
46 It works well.
47 I am a single mum even though i get 25% reduction i still struggle to pay my council tax.
48 Why change unless the council just want to make more money out of residents
49 It would help people more if you added a paragraph to the annual Council tax bill indicating who might benefit from a Council Tax reduction and where to apply for that reduction. A lot of people probably don't realise that they are eligible. A short form online, or in writing if they don't have access to a computer, answering basic eligibility questions should be enough for you to decide if they are eligible and for how much.
50 At the moment people have a rough understanding or they can find out about it easy enough as I had to. Keep changing established policy only makes it harder for people to know if they are entitled to it or not and causes confusion.
51 The current scheme appears to be too costly in terms of administration, and doesn't fit with the Universal Credit system.
52 THE SYSTEM IS VASTLY OVER COMPLICATED.
53 Seems fair to me as I am happy with current reduction that I receive. That said I was penalised when I moved to area from Durham where I received 100% reduction.
54 As it has been working for the benefit of everyone and has worked
55 In line with government schemes this needs updating to match the government schemes and reduce administration from the council
56 No comment
57 I think if people are on very low income or benefits should not have to pay council tax or should only pay a small amount of council tax. If people cannot afford to pay it, as in my case, it leads to anxiety and depression and if people are on medication already for these problems it just escalates the situation.
58 It is all very well to say that changes must be made because we can move forward, but we have endured cuts to benefits for almost the last fifteen years. We as a council must also protect the poor who cannot protect themselves. Citizens that are to ill to work must be also taken care off, how are they supposed meet the increases in council tax payments when they are to ill to work to acquire the funds to pay the council.
59 The new scheme sounds better
60 The council should have the right to amend this scheme. However, I would stress the importance that any changes does not penalise existing claimants too much.

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<p>61 I think the current council tax reduction fees are fair and that as a society we should help those in worse circumstances than ourselves.</p>
<p>62 The application process is currently very daunting (as I recall the online application had around 40 pages to fill out) and with Universal Credit most applicants will only be applying for Council Tax Reduction, not housing benefit, so many of the questions are redundant. It needs to be drastically simplified.</p>
<p>63 Doesn't really matter as the Council are a law upon themselves and don't bother about people's hardships so long as they get their money from everyone.</p>
<p>64 As a retired person, a householder and a pensioner, who has paid council tax in full throughout my working life and am still paying in full, I had no idea and have never been informed as to whether I could be eligible for a Council Tax reduction. Maybe the annual tax demand should clearly indicate the possibility of a tax reduction in order to alert newly retired pensioners.</p>
<p>65 Reduction for those receiving Universal credit should be retained.</p>
<p>66 Unless you are going to reduce the payments of those with less money to waste, I fear this will ultimately end up costing those who can ill afford it</p>
<p>67 The scheme needs to be updated in the light of the introduction of Universal Credit</p>
<p>68 The current system works, but may not be the best use of funds and will always need review in light of new schemes and working practices.</p>
<p>69 It would make a whole lot difference if house rent payments made by universal Credit are removed from the calculation of income in regards to council tax</p>
<p>70 It is so hard to make schemes fair to all, there are so many reductions you have listed.</p>
<p>71 council tax reduction scheme should be kept on its format as its clearly described what we paying and deducting.</p>
<p>72 The current scheme appears to be fairly balanced as does the proposed new scheme. I benefit from the current reduction scheme as a single occupant. However, I am of pension age and would hope that any new scheme introduced would include single occupancy and pensioners.</p>
<p>73 There comes a time for changes, especially due to the predicament that we have all faced over the past two years and the wounds to heal for the next couple of years, obviously this is all unprecedented so therefore changes need to be introduced to offer the right aid to those in need through these times, then revised again in October 2023. With the position of technology of today that wasn't around two years ago let alone many years ago, needs to be utilised to reduce administration not increase it. We are all slowly becoming a paperless society with the exception of the generations before ourselves "the current 70+" which respectfully find technology a struggle and prefer paper method. We should be a society that works smarter than harder, making things easier, like electronic registration "made easy", those with an account can access information custom to them and their needs and requirements, to offer information like a dashboard, all of this can be centrally managed with low administration "a lot less than 2+-years ago". We all know that taking advantage of today's technology makes lighter workload and encourages the general public to be part of that</p>
<p>74 Unsure about it because I have been lucky enough never to have used it so don't feel that I know enough about the scheme, even after reading the documentation, to have an opinion</p>
<p>75 It needs a change.</p>
<p>76 I'm unsure of what immediate impact any change to the scheme may or may not have on someone like myself who currently receives the council tax reduction. It sounds beneficial if it means that any households' benefits are disregarded as they're not considered a proper income, and if this was the case then people wouldn't be able to cope with the amount of council tax they're expected to pay.</p>
<p>77 The current scheme is confusing to understand meaning you are never truly certain that you are: a) getting your full entitlement b) not being overpaid and potentially being accused of fraud The calculation sent in the post is over simplified so much so that even with an A level in maths I had to play about with my various benefit ins and outs to take a guess at the amounts listed. Anyone with poor school grades could easily be committing fraud and not even know it. Reading the intro I was unaware of just how much money from my benefits is treated as income and its really not.</p>
<p>78 none</p>

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79 Undecided at the moment as without any figures to see it's difficult to say, obviously if the new reduction scheme will be easier to understand and will help more people then that will be a positive.
80 Having read all of the .pdf appendices I do not understand the income grids shown for the 3 models - the reason being that various worked examples would clearly spell out the impacts of the 3 models compared to today's model - with this clear info I would be in a position to understand the impact on different categories of resident to make an informed decision.
81 The council tax reduction scheme Is the only way many households are still able to function. Many Low income/non working/pensionable age households simply wouldn't be able to afford any changes. It is unlikely that changes will mean further reductions, only increases. I cannot afford any additions.
82 After reviewing all the background information on the facts, I feel it makes no sense to continue with the current scheme which has proved incompatible with Universal Credit, is not cost effective nor fair or supportive to claimants. Added to that continuing with the old scheme would force customers into debt and have little or no chance to ever recover financially. It will have a knock-on effect.
83 Reducing costs wherever possible is very important
84 To be honest i have had no problems with the council.
85 Time for change - My wife is Disabled and I can only work part time as we have 3 disabled Children. Maybe we might actually qualify under the new reforms.
86 I have chronic ling disease which is very debilitating and prevents me from working, I currently have to live on universal credit which is a paltry amount. any increases will severely affect my life as every other aspect of the cost of living is also rising. PLEASE think of the very poor people in medway and DO NOT increase this.
87 Seems to work OK under the present regulations
88 Because I don't have job and I'm not capable to pay without reduction
89 We are pensinors and as such use a lot less of the facilities you provide and yet you want to reduce the council tax for working families who say they cannot afford to pay. Because I worked and put a little by for my retirement we can not get a reduction and have to pay the full rate .How is that fair .
90 No comment
91 Most people have worked with the current scheme for years and understand it.
92 It works at the moment, however if a new system makes things easier than that would be a bonus
93 I believe he council should administer the scheme as it is the people in their borough that it applies to.
94 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme works well for participating households.
95 The old saying if it isn't broken, but did it work in the first place i.e are the right people receiving this benefit.
96 It seems that keeping the current format is more costly to administer and generally confusing to residents; therefore upgrading and simplifying the scheme is a timely change.
97 takes too long to sort out is such a hassle and hard to understand
98 I think the council should make the proposed changes to the tax reduction scheme
99 I am scared that you will reduce the amount of my council tax refund. I prefer to not "rock the boat"
100 I don't know how the current scheme is figured out but as a single father with a child who has a disability who is home schooled so I have to work part time the current reduction scheme did not make that much of a difference to my council tax charge.
101 I feel those on benefits should not get such a generous discount as some of them have more cash to spend than those on lower incomes. There does not seem to be a fair playing field.
102 It should all be applied for at the same time as uc
103 Changes at the moment will be hard on low income and unemployed people with all the other bills rising as well.
104 As a single occupier my demand on council services is greatly reduced in comparison with a couple with or without children
105 It all seems very confusing
106 It works so why change it.



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107 The current scheme is difficult for people to understand and the non-dependant deductions are complicated
108 you must be trying to change it because you consider it too generous
109 Not well at the moment - mental health problems ongoing. Not really well enough to answer the survey, unfortunately.
110 The outline is fairly complex, and I'm not sure much of it applies to me as I am not in receipt of benefits currently. However, I am receipt of a CT reduction as I live on my own - if this is not in question, and the new changes will be more cost effective, then I am in favour of the changes
111 The council should assist its customers who are in great need of help and who can not afford the council tax at the full rate which is ridiculous
112 When you change such a big and important scheme the admin cost would be huge and at a time when money is not available for some essential services paying much needed money to fix something that may be floored but not broken seems unnecessary
113 single person households and vulnerable groups should ct to get reductions
114 You have explained in the background information that keeping the scheme in its current form would mean increased admin costs (because of changes in Universal Credit), which would impact on other aspects of services you provide. So if that is the case, it can't be right to keep the scheme as it is, since council needs to make the best use of public money. However, before deciding whether I agree with this, I need to see how the changes you are proposing affect me and my two children, as I am a lone parent in full-time work.
115 I think that in the list a lot of people I know pay March through to April which is one in the new scheme you would not happen
116 Needs to be simplified
117 It would have been more sensible to describe the changes in an easier way for a layman to digest and understand. with what i have read and being a disabled person receiving PIP then having this payment discounted in any calculation for a council tax reduction, should i ever apply for one, can only be a good thing for me
118 im not reforming this scheme is such a good idea for single occupants with low incomes
119 Any proposed changes would no doubt be a decrease in any current reduction that Council Tax payers already receive.
120 The CTRS focuses on extracting money from the poorest. It is therefore unethical but also costs time to administer and to chase non-payment; this occurs in the form of third-party bailiffs which harm the PR of the council.
121 I am a single occupant and works full time so not sure whether any changes will affect the amount I pay.
122 the scheme as it is currently is costly and clunky to administer. It is confusing for the claimants
123 The scheme has worked very well in the past and I can see no reason to change now or in the future.
124 Just because I'm working age doesn't actually mean I can work! I am FULLY disabled, bed bound for the past 7 years but DO NOT qualify for ANY disability Reductions! How is that fair?? Also every year Medway Council increases and increases the council tax... and don't pat yourselves on the back for the COVID-19 "relief" as you just clawed it all back in this year's council tax! Also, stealing disabled peoples DLA/PIP payments to line your pockets and continue to provide substandard "Adult Social Services/Care" that even the RSPCA would have issues with is plain disgusting! It's hard enough to pay the ridiculous amount now to force people into paying more money for less Services is immoral!
125 There should be a trial period to see if it works or not.
126 The current system is complex and secret. The 65% is insufficient as the people are on very minimal incomes. You do not pay tax until you reach a threshold which is about £ 12500. This is a TAX.
127 Whilst I am not yet in receipt of an old age pension I was given early retirement in 2014 due to ill health. Any change or reduction to the current 25% single occupancy discount could potentially have a significant impact on my income from a private pension. I receive no benefits.
128 Not sufficient detailed information released at this time to make a qualified decision either way

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129 I think the changes are unnecessary
130 The scheme appears to be fair and takes into consideration the needs of claimants.
131 I am not sure to be honest and I think I am not the right person to be asked this question. I have never claimed any sort of benefits to really know how really how this process would affect me, so an opinion should be sought from people have have gone through the process and have more experience
132 Their needs to be change
133 as a single person household with no dependants- im unsure how this will affect me as im not able to get any benefits to help my living costs. If this is adjusted, it doesn't state if I will end up paying more?
134 It should not remain the same if the costs can be reduced AND there is not a financial implication to the recipients whereby they will not receive the same discount. If there is a way to reduce the cost of administration and working age people will not be financially impacted in a negative way then I agree a change should be made.
135 It works and although difficult to understand claimants know what they are entitled to.
136 Insufficient understanding to comment
137 Iam currently a single working age occupant and only just earning over the minimum age well until April 2022 anyway so unsure at this point if you are going to make me worse off or not so have opted to keep existing scheme
138 It sounds good to reduce administration costs.
139 Already looking at the scheme Consultation page and I'm confused. Plus cannot return to last page keep reread as you have to start all over again!!
140 This is aiding people in the area and the scheme should be kept live but the amount/level of support could be reviewed. Vs Current cost of living increases this may need to increase
141 It appears. people are being asked for council tax at random.
142 Some Tenants are having a Reduction Scheme which helps with paying Council Tax to the Council and is a Reduced amount, Affordable and is helpful. If people have problems paying this they should have a re-housinh scheme which is affordable. As alot of Tenants and flat owners or shared flats cause their own.
143 I don't know, so this box is useless.
144 Appears to work fine
145 hard enough to pay the 25% and everything else
146 If it's working then why should you change it
147 It would be nice to be considered for council tax reduction scheme
148 The council tax reduction should be reduced down, I got a back disc problem meaning I can't work a lot making it hard to afford the tax.
149 I am not sure what the council tax reduction scheme means
150 I'm just not sure
151 Think there should be a reduction for young rental/buyers as the council tax is larger than most other bills!
152 CTR is an important safety net for working households which can be in receipt of much lower net income than many households receiving UC inc housing benefit, Ct etc.
153 Do not reduce the amount. There are also too much T&Cs for many people to read in this survey to fully understand what is required for them to complete the surevey.
154 Do not reduce the amount. There are also too much T&Cs for many people to read in this survey to fully understand what is required for them to complete the surevey.
155 If the current scheme is kept the administration needs to be simplified for the customer. At the moment the customer is receiving too much paperwork, most of which is wastage. There must be a simple way of explaining to the customer how the council has worked out your bill. It only confuses everyone when they receive 8-12 pages of 'working out', therefore it becomes unclear to the customer what they should be reading.
156 Because there is very vulnerable people who rely on council tax reduction, otherwise they would struggle more than they do now

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157 Don't see a problem with it as it is.
158 It is difficult to answer this question without knowing how the scheme would be changed and how it would affect individuals
159 The scheme as it stands at the moment just doesn't work hard to understand and can be unfair
160 Any planned changes to the current scheme should not be to the detriment of existing claimants. This just looks like a cost-cutting exercise, at a time when the economy seems to be going pear shaped
161 There is no reason to keep the current scheme as the proposals appear to make things much easier for people needing help.
162 Don't see the point of change But I do understand we have to move forward
163 Whilst I am technically within the working age group I was given early retirement in 2014 due to ill health and receive a private pension. My income as a consequence is much less than when I was working and any change/reduction in the discount would potentially impact heavily on my finances.
164 think it should take into account those on disability and carer's allowance and other benefits.
165 I have no difficulty with it and it works well. As only 1 person I don't cost you a lot of extra money. I think it is unfair to discriminate between persons that work their butt off to earn their wage and pay their way, and persons that don't do anything and get extra benefits for this privilege.
166 paper form - answer illegible (something about austerity and something would be evil)
167 Yes want to help
<b>Question 7. Comments to Part 1 Introducing an income-based discount scheme (59 comments)</b>
1 I'm a single person who works but would lose out under this scheme.
2 only if i get 75 percent discount
3 But I do not agree with alot of people claiming disability allowance as to rent arrears or council Tax arrears and generally people on income support, of course people with a disability have a priority, but esa or income support also have key priorities, no one really should have problems paying a Council Tax each month, working class people have had problems keeping up.
4 Big brother wants more money from the middle to low earners. Who will decide what your income is? The better off will pay less as they have good accountants.
5 I think it will cause issues. Medway has many areas of deprivation and Lower Super Output areas and has some very distinct areas of affluence. I think it also gives the wrong impression about developing skills and aspiring for better jobs and higher pay, people should be on a pathway of progression not think if I do that it will affect my council tax. I work very hard to earn my money, why should there not be a reduction for people that earn over a certain amount then as well. Some people may choose to have a low income and some have no choice and don't think they should be rewarded for that. If that is the case I don't think it should be changed.
6 By the read of things i would see it as my council tax would rise which i am not able to afford.
7 Why should I as a two income family pay for some work shy low life crack head
8 We have to pay to cover the running cost not just in one area but across the whole .More money means a better organisation and better service all round. It's not possible to run the financial obligations like an elastic band cutting is stretching lets pay a little to save later.
9 That would be a fairer system
10 Not sure means
11 Even the reduction on council tax is still high for unemployed person and why is increasing every year . Should stay in one level for these families. There is plenty of other expenses to face this difficult life .
12 See previous point made. Bear in mind that Medway council is elected to govern, not to seek populist solutions to the problem or shed responsibility in this way.

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<p>13 I believe A PERSON SHOULD BE ASSESSED on their needs , so if a single person has a dependant son over the age of 25 , this must be considered as would a child , without taking money for a room he occupies , people struggle more than ever now , council tax is well over priced , currently there is a strike where dustbin are not being emptied , not this gillingham area ,but causing a health hazard , so this should reflect in payments to council tax .to keep putting up council tax, where water rates once used to be included is dismal and disgusting .this planet is suffering with over population and migrants,</p>
<p>14 Why should the council have access to my financial position to pay for their short-comings in money management</p>
<p>15 It is always those that only just don't qualify that have to pay out and then struggle. Everyone accesses the same services, should all pay the same</p>
<p>16 It is the cost of the tax that is important. I receive a reduction because I am a single person household. Any change in that is unacceptable. My household makes less demands on council services, e.g rubbish collection than a multi-person household. Most multi-person house holds have greater income than mine and so should pay the whole cost. This would change would discriminate against single person households</p>
<p>17 However, I think the rate of discount should be less</p>
<p>18 No</p>
<p>19 The council doe not have to bring this scheme on line at all, why change the current way of working. As a council you are reducing your internal costs if that is the case cut the wages across the board from the highest paid to middle management and see where that brings us rather then bring the burden on the people least able to protect them selves.</p>
<p>20 There always changes but none to which really helps the person ..</p>
<p>21 The scheme based on income (per week) is o.k. If i was setting up this scheme, i would try to simplify the bands. Less options, less admin. Simpler to understand for claimants? Again, one single additional payment 'because you have children' . Payment is therefore, not dependent on the number of children.</p>
<p>22 People who have worked hard all their lives and beyond pension age will be targeted to pay more, while the people who claim benefits and have never worked get no reductions to their payments.</p>
<p>23 So at the moment I get a discount of 7 or 8 hundred, but now you wanna give me 239.99 discount, how the hell would I find Near w grand.</p>
<p>24 Anything income based administered by the government requires extra powers of investigation and enforcement. One only has to look at the insane powers and liberties taken by the HMRC to see how bad it can get. An income based scheme from the council would be supportable if the council got what it needed from the HMRC/DWP, with no additional powers for itself.</p>
<p>25 Should be simple flat rate per household otherwise needs need to be verified</p>
<p>26 People that have higher income than others should not be penalised for it, the level playing field should be the same and to be fair and not excluded. Exception to the rule where the property is larger than the other "band type", location etc....</p>
<p>27 Having read this page I still do not understand your proposal and the impact it will have on me or other types of resident.</p>
<p>28 I don't understand this, you have not made this easy to read, or understand - it would appear this survey has been created by someone who understands the systems. I'm 1 question away for closing this down and not bothering.....</p>
<p>29 I do think Child maintenance should be counted as an income. If the couple were living together with their children then their income would be counted. However some parents with custody of the children can receive quite a substantial amount. I appreciate some payments are periodic. But that can be said for work. When I was a single parent I received no child maintenance (ex husband was not working or the maintenance service we're unable to get hold of an employer), but I was working full time. A friend of mine was working 2 days a week and got over £700 per month child maintenance. On paper she had more income then me and got every benefit she was entitled to. However I was entitled to none. How is this fair?</p>
<p>30 They should pay the full rate like we have to. We have to cut down on things some months to pay our full rate.</p>

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31 So confusing !!! meant to be simplifying things but this complicates things even more !!!!!
32 No, because peoples situations change and those like myself who work with agencies etc have varying wage structures and cannot say 100% we are or will be earning X amount over the course of the tax year.
33 because it should matter how many children u have it should all be the same
34 As always, those with income support, child support etc get even more benefits and those of us working and unable to claim benefits and have no children because we cant afford it get financially penalised again to prop up all those who cant keep their legs closed
35 Only disregarding carers of you are on ESA is unfair and the earnings disregard of £25 is ludicrous. Lets limit councillors expences to £25PW INSTEAD
36 Unfortunately not well at the moment - mental health condition ongoing. Not well enough to do this survey at the moment.
37 I'm sure any scheme can improved? But my personal opinion is until as a council you have the money to implement the new scheme and the means to rectify any problems. I think the next 2or even 3 years are going to be dealing with the fallout from Covid. Which I think is far from over.
38 single person households use less council services like waste/water etc but asking them to pay more than a 10 person household just because they are on a higher income feels like its crime to study hard, work hard and earn more. Not a good example for future generations
39 I don't agree with the income grid you propose above because you have put couples and lone parents into the same columns. I don't think that is fair - in my case, one person's wage pays for two children, not two people's wages. The effect of what you propose above is that I would no longer receive a 25% reduction, if I've understood correctly, I would get no help, at a time when outgoings for my children are increasing because they are getting older and want to go to university. So the impact of what you propose for us, would be less available income to spend on my children and opportunities for them, and paying more in council tax. I'm a teacher so I also currently have my pay frozen. I don't want my children to lose out because you are trying to cut admin costs by changing a scheme which currently benefits us. So I would also want the income band to alter for lone parents with two children. (And lone parents with one child). My outgoings are not reducing, they are going to increase, since my children are also talented at sports, but actually also what incentive then to progress through the teaching bands, more workload, less time with my own children and overall less available income to spend on them? Obviously I'm not going to agree with a scheme that disadvantages my family at a time when the cost of everything is increasing and my own pay is frozen anyway. My children are the future, I want the best for them. I'm on U1, which puts us out of any reduction in council tax with what you propose.
40 I don't know about an alternative, however it seems unfair for some households with a higher household income to lose out if people there are in employment than a household with a lower income to have a greater discount where adults are not working, if this is a possibility.
41 This is so confusing and should have been made easier for people to understand. At the end of the day any consultation ALWAYS achieves its aim
42 i feel the richer people should always pay more
43 Why should the burden always fall on those who already contribute the most income tax and national insurance to this wasteful government. The Barnett formula, which discriminates against English Councils, needs to be abolished and the savings redistributed fairly.
44 As usual those hard working families will lose out.
45 however I do not agree with the MIF for self-employed sub-contractors as they have no way of being able to manage their own work - I think it is a barbaric introduction with UC and creating an awful lot of poverty and homelessness will follow for men disproportionately who already have it difficult when trying to get housed. They are not being fairly treated by their 'employers' or the benefit system as it is. I also thing 35% of the council tax when on the lowest wages or off long term sick is a lot of money to find
46 I do not see inclusion in the proposed arrangements for those with a mental illness like dementia or Alzheimer's disease and in receipt of attendance allowance being disregarded for 25% of council tax - this arrangement is in place in other local authorities.

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47 But the discount for “regular” pensioners should be higher! No matter how much you earn, I agree with the cap on dependant children... you should only have as many children that you can afford to support! This is why people pop out as many kids they can just to sit on benefits or expect the government or tax payers past and present to support their children! Also, tax the higher earners and civil servants, who get discounts and perks for everything, let them pay the “lion’s share” of the administration costs as I can guarantee that the people providing administration are amongst those whom get the lowest pay and so-called discounts in the first place!
48 This is a survey designed for people working in the benefits sector to use. This survey does not relate to ordinary citizens. Q5 asked where should the council get the money to cover the additional costs, the failed city of culture bid (£2 Million), the failed city status bid (£2 Million) and more of the same.
49 Income based will still penalise families with more than 2 children, those already on benefits, pensioners (single) who have a small private pension & state pension who are very slightly above the threshold for any benefits. I am not qualified to propose an alternative, without fully understanding all the facts that are not expressed in this survey, proposals are for the people/'companies' being paid to work in this consultation
50 I am the only person in the household- and as I don't have any children I get NO assistance or other benefits. Why should council tax reduction be income based? If I could afford to pay more, I wouldn't be living in a one bedroom flat.
51 Does the income based scheme include the income from benefits as there are a lot of people on benefits that get more income than me?
52 I don't disagree.
53 money grabbing it looks like, seasonal events should be ditched
54 I have a son who is single with no children and on a low income. He gets no benefits or help of any type from anybody except a reduction in his council tax. But now even that looks like it is going. His tax's pay for other peoples benefits and other peoples children. But as a single white man he gets nothing.
55 Only if the DLA and PIP are included as income as this is a substantial amount
56 because 1 person who doesn't cause trouble to the council and works very hard to pay their way therefore deserves a discount, so why should they be discriminated against 1 person that doesn't work very hard to pay their way and may not be interested to do so but therefore gets a discount?
57 As a disable person I don't think it is fair I pay 45% of my benefit out in council tax with ever increasing fuel bills to pay aswell
58 paper form - answer illegible (something about millionaires? and tax breaks)
59 I would like to tell you about the reduction of the garbage payment because od to múch
<b>Question 9. Comments to Part 2 To limit the number of dependant children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two for all applicants (48 comments)</b>
1 Those with more than 2 children are once again penalised
2 There is no point if you are still limiting it to 2 kids (what is the national average)
3 I have 4 children and 2 after this date would mean i end up paying more
4 Not sure
5 Would penalise families with more children
6 Child benefit is important and very costly to bring up a child ,to target people with children is despicable . THE LAW MIGHT CHANGE TO LIMIT FAMILIES TO TWO CHILDREN .
7 Discount based on income and number of children (without limit).
8 Single person discount Based on size of house. Bigger house, pay more No discounts for benefits, they still access same services. If you have a big house, you will pay more
9 Multiple child families should plan for their costs before multiplying, not expect everyone else to burden the costs
10 No

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11 Why should we limit the amount of discount for children to two only, the council does not take Child Benefit into account at the moment. This is another way to bring further hardships to poor families with more than two children. They can apply for further help if need but why put them in this difficult position in the first place.

12 People don't choose to be needing help but can't take off a kids mouth ..

13 I don't have a problem with this in principle for new claimants. However, a better idea, for new claimant, is a household plan. This focuses on who lives at a house; the income/benefits at that house and the birthdates of the eligible child(ren).

14 An alternative to this would be a percentage reduction added per child this could easily be calculated by a simple spread sheet.

15 So my child benefit that doesn't go anywhere near to feeding and clothe my child will now be used to pay council tax, robbing \*\*\*\*,

16 It should be changed as people have a tendency to have children to get more income.

17 They would be in receipt of child benefit. This should be counted towards income.

18 I can see how it would be easier to bring it in line with the government only paying child benefit for two children, but I'm not sure how helpful or majorly necessary it is to charge families more council tax for a 3rd child or more. It seems as though it will be penalising people who fall pregnant with a 3rd child and will put more pressure on them, knowing that they won't receive any benefit to help, but that their council tax will increase.

19 I have always struggled with any generic 2 child maximums. The idea that only 3rd and up children born after the initial creation of this rule fine, should I have another child I am doing so in full knowledge they will not receive support. Everyone's circumstances are different but there is no serious provisions for extenuating circumstances besides get buried in debt nearly lose your house they pay lump sum to clear debt(court charges not included) long term it fixes nothing instead just repeating loop until something changes outside of the benefits system to break cycle This is my story and demonstrates work needs to go into the help for special cases your current additional support left me and my children at genuine risk of harm. All of mine were born before the idea was even being suggested in parliament I cannot shed 2 children due to a reduction in my finances yet before my sons diagnosis, the benefit cap figure applied to my family meant after paying the top rent amount (£110/week conveniently equal to 2 children's tax credit entitlement) I am still playing catch up on council tax bills that I couldn't afford then. 5 people cannot live on 3 peoples money I didn't intend to be a divorced single mum of 4 my husband turned violent after 12 years together. I looked for work companies lie when they say they want to emoy single mums, they want the time flexibility of 16-18 years with no commitments. The discretionary payment cleared my mounting rent debts £2000 caused by my then husband refusing to separate the benefit claims (primary claimant has to cancel joint claim for me to claim single) taking all money that wasn't labelled for kids and not paying the rent top up. Over a year later with threat of eviction this was remedied by a guy from MHS. After every section of council and government benefits agency I could find either refused to discuss or said nothing could be done. 5 years later my mum cleared the court cost amount (balance was still shown as rent arrears on my account, they won't amend tenancies in arrears) that had stopped me from removing a domestic abuser removed by the police from my tenancy making me unable to legally turn him away from the house. I needed the discretionary payment to cover full amount to be safe in my house no one considered that just the numbers!

20 The number of children should be taken into account and be factored into the calculations used to determine the level of support provided. This is because more children equals more day to day family expenses.

21 I don't like the idea of a tax on children.

22 Having children is a choice - If you have more children you are responsible for paying for them - I have 3 children!

23 They should have to pay the full rate like most of us have to

24 Pensioners must be considered ,for the reduction of their council tax, because the shops and other establishments do always consider discounts or reduction on their council tax.

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25 I think if the money is there to fund an Exceptional Hardship Scheme then that money should be used to support those applicants with three or more children directly rather than having to make a claim under the scheme. The fact that this scheme exists shows that these people will invariably face exceptional hardship.
26 Yes because if you can't afford to have more children then don't have them and expect others to make allowances and support them for you. We should, however, with a genuine need but appreciate it is hard to define that
27 These people who choose to have ten kids say, know that they will only receive help with the first two, then that's down to them, and if you are pregnant and told your unborn child will have a long term illness and still go ahead then that cost should be meet by them.
28 if you have more than 2 kids you have to provide for them regardless of how much you get to give the same discount to people with 2 children as those with 4 makes no sense and will only mean low income families are struggling more i dont know what the answer is but its not that
29 I dont have children, so not in a position to give an opinion
30 There has to be changes but fair to those on benefits and the tax payer must be a balanced one
31 It should be based on where you live and the size of your house not your income. Incomes can fluctuate and cause more work in recalculation or fraudulent claims. People with lots of children tend to live in bigger homes yet get all the benefits and those in smaller, don't. For once, this should be about the size of property, location, whether owned or rented not I can afford to live in a bigger house in a better area because I am getting more benefits scenario. Council tax should be about property not income, that's what the benefit system is there for. If the council tax system has to prop up the benefit system then that is wrong.
32 I'm not wholly sure, but I would be very concerned about certain people's ability and means to access relevant hardship funds in a timely manner
33 I guess the coucil tax should be based on the usage of services and should be fair to all irrespective of earnings.Excluding the pensioners only.
34 It makes sense to align this with what is happening nationally, but households with more that two children have more outgoings, so it doesn't seem very fair, and potentially puts more children into poverty?
35 Yet again it is all about denying money the poorest most needy and vulnerable members of our society. Are you all happy with that?
36 child benefit is restricted to 2 children so should this
37 It should be in line with DWP... don't have more kids than you can afford to support, whether you're on benefits or not. Don't procreate if you can't afford it! Why should other have to pay to support your kids!
38 "If the applicants face exceptional hardship they may apply for additional support through the Council's Exceptional Hardship Scheme" only if they know how to access the scheme can do 100mtr hurdles in under 30 seconds and know ****.
39 Not relevant as I have no children.
40 Don't keep penalising the same group of people if they are already being penalised by central government (DWP) It all becomes double taxation which ever way it is viewed. I'm not qualified to offer a solution as should any professional advisors 'employed' by Medway Council are paid to do so in consideration to the council & residents
41 No dependants so doesn't seem fair to comment
42 This will create financial hardship which will directly effect children who are the most vulnerable within our community. I propose that arrangements under the current scheme, which takes into account all children within the household and award them adependant's addition within the calculation of their needs, should be maintained.
43 Penalises second families with more than 2 children - increase support for families with 3 or more children
44 Seems to be fair especially if other benefits mean counteract this
45 I don't disagree.



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46 My Son is single with no Children and on a low income the only help he gets is a reduction in his council tax. Poor people or people with more children than they can support should get help from other means other benefits not council tax..

47 paper form - answer illegible (possibly "stealing from the poor is an outrage and it is not" ... illegible)

48 I would like to tell you about the reduction of the garbage payment because to much

### **Question 11. Comments to Part 3 To set 'flat rate' non-dependant deductions (43 comments)**

1 Dependant people could slip though the dependency net with the amount of beaurocracy involved, there could perhaps be a face to face interview.

2 Why should a working dependant get more money where as a non dependant not working get Lees

3 what if they are disabled ? we pay enough council tax as it is give the chiefs a large pay cut

4 It put a huge strain on lower income families, for which even £5 is a large sum of money if you don't have it I turn causing more people to get into debt.

5 Should be increased if working for the first year as they would need help when they first start a job.

6 if a non dependant has no income how are they paying the flat rate of £5 per week .. perhaps the householders cannot afford to pay this extra flat rate of £5 per week as ultimately it will be their responsibility to cover this amount. some non dependants do not qualify for benefits due to their age or circumstances. if the householder is on benefits they already receive enough to cover basic living cost , which most of the time does not even cover gas electricity water bills per week , let alone extra charges for council tax that they already contriute towards and there is not much left each week without the fact that the cost of living is soaring daily food gas electric but benefits and wages are not increasing at the same rate... where will they find £20 from each month without getting into more debt?

7 I don't really understand. Why more if the non-dependant is working? This does not make any sense at all.

8 Not sure

9 Many single parent with sons and daughters who reach 18 years old do not collect rent or payment towards concil tax - because they are still in education or not in well paid job, also do not accept that they should pay as they are not the house owner and that in their eyes they are still only the son or daughter. For children of people on income support and the child goes onto income support this should be taken directly for the child and not the responsibility of the house owner. Most sons and daughters do not get work the day after their 18th birthday. They should not be included until the September after they have left full time education. I am now retired but have been through this with my son when he became 18 years of age and as he rightly said "The bill is not in my Name" after a very rough divorce he knew that I was not responsible for my ex husbands debits unless the bill was in my name. 18-21 years olds should be exempt or presented with a council tax bill in their own name. If they can claim Universal Credit at 18 then they should be able to claim Council Tax benefit at 18 regardless of where they live. A person is NOT Responsible for a bill that is not in there own name.

10 No discount for adults living with parents unless disabled or carers. If not working parent's decision to support. If working should pay their share of household expenses (and probably do in most cases).

11 We are currently in receipt of benefits as my husband had a major stroke in 2020 and has major brain damage. We have supported our son through his A Levels at this very stressful time for him and he did exceptionally well. However he chose to get full time employment instead of going to University so that he can be at home to help me with his Dad. He is on a low wage as he's only just started ,so certainly couldn't be expected to cover the £40 a month we will lose by him living here .I feel this is very unfair, Council Tax should based on the property value and owners situation , it isn't the poll tax so no one else in the property should be charged independently.

12 Non-dependents should not qualify for a discount

13 The more claimants = more admin. The only circumstance for the 'one household claim policy' is if there are more than one family living at an address.

14 I had to move out of mums for being punished to work having to pay all rent and c tax. So if 10 or 5 instead of being ripped off then yes, otherwise no.

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15 Why would you offer a £10.00 reduction to a non-dependent who is working, over a £5.00 reduction to a non-dependent who is not working. The person or persons that are registered as responsible for the council tax regardless of how many non-dependents there are, should still be responsible for the tax to their residents and location The exception to the rule as I had mentioned from the start to have their own logon portal
16 I disagree with this because even people who are non dependent can still sometimes struggle with council costs, particularly around the holidays and for people who have children, and most importantly those who are receiving benefits. I would propose that a reduction of council costs should be available to everyone, particularly those who I mentioned above
17 I think so, another wordy question - So your reducing the reduction? in other words you will get less reduction.
18 I am unsure of this one as I do not claim DLA or PIP but I do claim it for my 5 year. My 19 yr old daughter who is classed as my non-dependant does claim PIP so I am not sure how this part of the new scheme would impact me.
19 To be fair, it should continue to be based on the circumstances of the non dependant
20 I live alone, so do not have an opinion
21 You could take an X amount from benefits for council tax prior to the claimant getting paid. If the claimant does X amount of work then their contribution should increase.
22 YOU NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE AGE OF THE NON DEP ALSO IF YOUR BENEFIT IS ONLY £50PW AND YOU DEDUCT £5 PW HOW IS THAT PERSON GOING TO FEED THEMSELVES, CONTRIBUTE TO BILLS AND JOB SEARCH
23 I do not agree that those in receipt of a relevant disability benefit should have a flat rate deduction. I feel these should continue as the current system, zero deduction if the applicant and/or partner is in receipt of a relevant disability benefit. Applying a flat rate deduction to those who are already vulnerable due to a health condition or disability would have an impact on their ability to manage as they do not currently have to pay these deductions.
24 I'm not sure, but those deductions do not sound particularly high, I worry some people may struggle
25 too many loopholes and encourage people provide false information
26 At the moment this doesn't apply to me, and also I found reading it rather confusing.
27 Will this apply to disabled people not sure that should happen
28 all adults residing at a premises should pay their way
29 Again hard working people on low incomes penalised yet again.
30 I disagree if it's left to the applicant's to foot the bill. "In theory" Medway Council knows the names, addresses and National Insurance Numbers of the non dependents, go after them for your blood money! Also the discount should be the same rate for both working and non working dependants.
31 I agree that if the applicant has another a doula living with them then they should not receive the full discount benefit as the other adult should have their source of income and be able to give the application money towards the tax. However I don't agree that everyone should automatically receive the deduction with a non dependent as people's will play the system. I think the reduction should be discontinued where another no dependent is living in the house and the money saved should be used to keep everyone's rate low
32 What about services (military) families.
33 Proposed change would not appear to be relevant to my case as I live alone.
34 All non-dependant persons in one household should contribute to the expenses of that household whether they are in work or receiving benefit, if that is not forthcoming to the named Council Tax payer that becomes their responsibility of that household not the rest of the community, very much like their food/phone bills.
35 As with only 2 dependents being recognised regardless of how many children you may have, the same should apply to each household calculating a maximum of 2 adults.
36 I don't disagree.
37 Why should a non dependant be given a reduction if they are in work?

## APPENDIX 4

38 Find out what the non dependent is earning - many are living at home to save money for a deposit for buying a house so the taxpayer is finding this by subsidising the householder who is getting the ctr
39 Unanswered on paper form
40 we used to have a scheme years ago whereby every adult paid, would this work now? can't remember what it was called or under what government regime.
41 (paper form - question was left blank)
42 paper form - answer illegible
43 I would like to tell you about the reduction of the garbage payment because to much
<b>Question 13. Comments to Part 4 Disregarding the housing element of Universal Credit (40 comments)</b>
1 What have you done with all the money that you did use last year apart from the covid sites what are not need
2 As long as council Tenants are aware of these or the changes for them.
3 They needs to be more details than that given before I could agree ?
4 Are you just trying to save money; to pay for council errors?
5 I agree that it makes sense to fall in line with DWP but if it going to cost more for the scheme then no. Find another way to save money so the cost doesn't reduce. There is lots of people that have no choice but have housing benefit and I fully respect and understand but there is some many people in Medway that choose not to work and have housing benefit and make an active choice to live their lives like that, this seems like it is encouraging this and the scope of thinking around this has been narrow.
6 Council tax is a a massive price we pay/ workers pay, every year you increase, will get to a point people wont be able to afford food you keep increasing all these costs. Im a single mum on benefits and yes i pay small price now in comparision to others but i also have other bills that rise every year to pay.
7 I should not pay any more than anyone else just because I make an effort to provide for my family and not live off of benefits
8 The housing element does not cover ground rent and some charges I am personally liable to pay, whether working or not and then you have to wait nine months. I am therefore worse off already than somebody living with the parents for example, although by your reckoning they cannot help out parents apparently by your reckoning with council tax even if they are working. The way the Government treats owner occupiers claiming benefits is already appalling. Just don't change this as it is just not fair. If council tax is paid by renters directly to you allow the housing reduction but often it is paid through rent.
9 I would still view this as income as it is being used for housing, the same way I would use my own income. The money is still being received so why increase the cost of the scheme in order to ignore this fact.
10 Not sure
11 Everyone pays the same regardless of benefits
12 I really don't have a good understanding of benefit scheme. I just gratefully accept what I am awarded. This is only whilst I can afford to live a reasonably happy, albeit frugal life.
13 Provided those qualifying have been thoroughly assessed and there is a genuine reason for credit
14 While there is an increase in the cost of the scheme, who will the increase be passed on too.
15 Why we have to pay when it simply don't work for the people in need
16 Declare: I am an unpaid carer.
17 If their benefits bring their income up to the same level as those who do not warrant a reduction, then they should be treated on a 'level playing field'.
18 Keep it as it is
19 Again those who pay the most will still pay the most, but they might not have the big income to cover this
20 This is a personal matter to the individual and their circumstances. Maybe best to have a leverage level displayed to illustrate guideline and requirements to register themselves as such.
21 Will the increase in the overall cost of the scheme be past on to the less fortunate????

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22 Universal credit should include an element to pay for council tax.
23 Understandably an increase may be necessary but only as long as the increase was fractional and not so great that customers were forced into further financial hardship.
24 Because some people don't use the housing element of their u.c for housing and just spend it. People on benefits need to live in the real world. They are receiving benefits and U are giving them a greater discount because of it. Where is the incentive to get these people back to work or upping their working hours if they are working. You do not give me a discount for my mortgage payments. So how is this fair? The social sector and private sector is totally out of sync. Sick to death of this entitled society.
25 NONE
26 Those who say they can not afford to pay the full rate .Most likely have the latest mobile phones lardge tvs sky etc .
27 The most vulnerable should be supported but using UC housing element as that marker may not be that accurate.
28 I do not claim universal credit, so do not have an opinion
29 The scheme is open to abuse and makes claimants even less likely to seek employment
30 If their benefit can be discounted can te same for my income be too
31 not happy
32 I agree you should disregard certain benefits. Either way your going force a "slight increase in the overall cost of the scheme"
33 I do think everyone should have to pay council tax. Why would you not? They are already benefiting in a scheme. I believe that it should be looked at very carefully and perhaps more housing credit given if it's a must to cover the cost of the police etc. I think this would make it clearer for everyone.
34 Difficult to answer without knowing what the proposed bands are and therefore the potential impact on my income.
35 Always owned my home so no experience
36 I agree with this scheme but some Tenants have debt problems paying Council Tax, and as I have had a Council Reduction I seen it help and easier to pay monthly. Their is no excuse for any Tenant not to be able to pay Council Tax even if they had a Reduction Scheme, generally even working class Tenants should have a Reduction.
37 I don't disagree
38 it should all be included as income, a person who works and has a mortgage would not get a disregard fir housing costs
39 stealing from the poor does not help alleviate poverty
40 I would like to tell you about the reduction of the garbage payment because to much
<b>Question 15. Comments to Part 5 Removing the current earnings disregards and replacing them with a standard £25 per week disregard for all working applicants (35 comments)</b>
1 Makes it harder for those working with more than 2 children
2 It will make others suffer! There should never be a reduction in any support
3 Not sure
4 Should be means tested regardless of circumstances. If other schemes in previous pages take account of children, OAPs, disability etc...
5 It will; discriminate against single personhouseholds
6 Charges are not fair.
7 I think that this would set a president for limiting child birthing rates in society removing a basic human right. The alternative would be to have again a simple grid deduction per child which is not difficult when using a simple spreadsheet.
8 People who intentionally only do 16 hrs should be included

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9 it seems like this is applying the same disregard to single parents as to couples and that's not fair. They may be working too but they have to support all the family overheads from one salary rather than sharing with another. Also two adults are going to use more of what C Tax pays for than one.
10 Keep as it is
11 May seem fairer to some families. Does not affect me as do not have children. Unable to comment further.
12 As explained in my previous. This is a personal matter to the individual and their circumstances. Maybe best to have a leverage level displayed to illustrate guideline and requirements to register themselves as such.
13 It sounds as though more families will be left with no choice but to apply for the exceptional hardship fund which is both stressful and maybe then more work on the councils part.
14 I disagree with this as having a large family can be challenging so it's important that for those that struggle get as much support offered to them as possible. I would propose, particularly for newly large families, that they are offered support
15 Does this exemption apply to me, I'm a single person, working without any dependents?
16 I agree to this proposal as it seems to be the better of the choices, it concerns me that larger families may miss out on support. As long as the processing of the Hardship Scheme Assessment (if eligible), were speedy so families do not slip into further financial hardship.
17 We should support families already struggling with childcare costs
18 In this day and age If you can not afford to keep your child clothes and feed you why bring a child into this world. There is so much protection now to not have children.
19 Again those with three children or more will have to apply to the councils Exceptional Hardship Scheme whereas if the council assess that a family may be in exceptional financial hardship that could trigger an extra payment without the family having to make a separate application.
20 To be fair, it should be based on the circumstances of the individual in work
21 FAR TOO LOW A BLANKET DISREGARD not fair on lower earners
22 no
23 Although administratively simpler, it doesn't seem very fair to lump everyone together and apply the highest disregard (£25) amount you currently have.
24 I don't think it's fair to say that single people, couples, lone parents etc. should have the same disregard because their setup is different/costs are different.
25 Yet again the needs the vulnerable are ignored and they, not the council, will have to do with less
26 Looks again like hard working families will get less.
27 Don't have large families if you can't support them. Help out ALL pensioners and the Disabled instead!
28 As a non-working individual with a private pension this, again, is a proposal which would not seem applicable to my situation.
29 Seems to have worked up till now
30 I feel like there will be a lot extra cost to this and it will be on the cost of something else. I do not have alternative ideas sorry.
31 Once again people paying for extra childcare will probably be worse off
32 I don't disagree
33 It seems
34 paper form - answer illegible
35 I would like to tell you about the reduction of the garbage payment because to much
<b>Question 17. Comments to Part 6 To introduce a Minimum Income Floor for self-employed applicants (44 comments)</b>
1 I am sorry but anybody who is working should not be getting any any benefit why should there when I got done for my girlfriend working back ****

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2 Self employed, depending on the job, are paid at different rates per hour/per day and, what happens if the minimum wage is scrapped.
3 Should keep a period for start-up for self-employed people. Just keep what there is at the moment. They get little enough support already.
4 Not sure
5 If they don't work 35 hours and they only work 5 how can they afford to pay extra if the income was not received Take note of all the hours worked not a standard figure
6 Why can't you just take into calculate the income based on the year before just like they do with normal tax every April.. If they can do it so can council tax
7 What you propose does not take into account that if you don't work - you don't earn. Hours may vary from week to week. Sole Traders like taxi drivers, driving instructors, beauty therapists, construction workers are self employed but do not necessarily work 35 hours 52 weeks of the year. Each person has ups and downs in flows of work, but on going expenses that do not change, like rent for chair, room, to taxi office etc, or franchise for use of car advertising etc or tools and short contracts 4-6 week one site then nothing for a month maybe then maybe next 6 mths work. The self employed do not get holiday pay, sick pay or national public holiday pay. There is no easy solution so therefore keep current system even though it does not necessarily work for all. All I know is that I spent time as a self employed person (call sole trader for tax purposes) and that one suit does not fit all persons. Very many years ago back in the 90's got into serious financial difficulties and the council man took a copy with my permission of the last 12 mths bank statement and came back with the reality that I was only earning £30 per week although my mortgage was being paid, was advised to get an accountant, which I could not afford. Received full council tax rebate and given necessary form for the up coming year. Best system over my working life was in the late 80s. Returned to work temp up London after have youngest child but because not permanent I was put as a casual signer at the unemployment exchange, found that although I work Mon-Fri I still had to sign for Saturday as I had not worked this helped with child care costs which government did not help with at the time. Sorry but child minders got greedy - the year it was introduced child care Doubled. That a debate I do not want to go down. Keep the current system - at least it helps
8 There should be no special discount/benefit for self employed. 1-it is their decision to change status- 2- there are already substantial tax benefit available by doing so- 3-it should not be a local authority consideration.
9 Irrespective of income, using the same services so all pay equally
10 Although my husband can no longer work ,he used to be a Taxi Driver and sometimes took very little money .He used to work 60 hours +, but very often his money would have fallen well below the national wage. To increase council tax in this circumstance on an assumption is dreadful and will put self employed people under even greater pressure. This should not be changed from the old system.
11 Self-employed benefit in other ways, eg paying themselves dividends rather than salary to avoid/reduce paying tax
12 In my experience it takes more than 1 year of self employment to be profitable. I would increase the period to 3 years.
13 If income is 'king' - you don't have to worry about hours worked.
14 An alternative would be to use predicted income for the following year as stated by self taxation paperwork. Use a simple formula, then deduct if applicable
15 Keep it as it is
16 This discriminates against the self employed and means that they will not get a fair reduction in Council Tax if their business income falls below the National Minimum Wage. They would need to provide accounts so that they can receive an appropriate Council Tax reduction.
17 Most business when started run in a deficit and the self employed person is likely to be earning less than the stated minimum, this will stifle small and independent upstart business preventing future growth for the local economy
18 Unable to comment as this does not affect me. However, any changes to the scheme may seem fairer.

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19 As explained in my previous. This is a personal matter to the individual and their circumstances. Maybe best to have a leverage level displayed to illustrate guideline and requirements to register themselves as such to qualify the reduction.
20 This appears to disadvantage those people that work self-employed because their employer has pushed them into self-employed status, not cool
21 My late husband was self employed and his wages fluctuated greatly. This proposal would/could have left us severely out of pocket depending on his wages.
22 I think it should not be 'assumed' that all Self Employed people earn the minimum wage or above but instead- perhaps local authorities could work with these businesses to first take into account what their monthly earnings are 'before' they are billed. Not only for the first year but as a matter of practice so they are billed on individual ability to pay.
23 Don't impose a minimum level which would harm those on the lowest incomes
24 NONE
25 If you are reducing the council tax for some it should be for all.
26 Because I am self employed, and I might working more than 35 h week, but selling Vintage clothing isn't plain sailing I am certainly not earning 35h weekly wages, still have bills to pay, which just about managing with help of Universal credit, prices are going up, but minimum living allowance has already been reduced, by £86 per month. I am not entitled to warm home discount, winter is coming up energy will increase too. And I sure I am not only one in this situation where I could do with keeping as much council tax reduction as possible.
27 To call yourself self employed, there should be a max amount of hours, as cash in hand still go's on,
28 it should not be assumed it should go on fact as this will cause such hardship to many
29 Im not self employed so do not have an opinion
30 If you are just starting your self employment or in these covid times having to start over again it can take a while to get your self employment up and running. Also if like myself you have a child with a disability but still want to work but can only do specific hours because your child has to be with you and can not be left alone assuming the applicant will be hitting the minimum hours per week is not a level playing field for some people. There must be a way to assess peoples individual circumstances in this situation.
31 Self-employed should be registered companies so that their incomes and taxes are properly accounted for. Since the government has introduced schemes like IR35, it appears selfemployed people are still earning money that they are not declaring and able to claim benefits.
32 People go self emp for many reasons. It may be to fit in with child care by doing some cleaning during the day. not every one who is self employed can earn over £1200 pm. this is punishing people
33 same as before
34 It seems unfair to penalise the people earning less than NLW?
35 It can be quite difficult to run a business, so assuming self-employed people earn the minimum wage is not appropriate to assume. Is it not possible/appropriate to learn more about these individuals' income to help them better?

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36 I do not agree with the MIF. The MIF is not realistic to what it is really like for self-employed people on low income. It does not take into account the true cost of being self-employed and does not allow the time that it takes to build a successful business. It is even worse for claimants that are sub-contractors where to all intent and purposes they are 'employed' so cannot go and find their own work but are at the beck and call of their contractor who can use them as and when they want with very little notice. If the claimant then says no they lose that work stream. It is company's using cheap labour and the workers have no security and very little income less than low paid PAYE workers. This means they have little financial resilience and on top of this get less help. It disproportionately affects men who tend to be in these kinds of jobs but now even women are working with companies such as Hermes as self-employed parcel deliverers getting about 59p a parcel. I think sub-contracted people should be treated the same as PAYE - using their invoice income and taking an amount off for NI and Tax each month or week - MIF is just an evil invention and in time many claimants will become homeless and destitute when all they are doing is trying to eek a living. Businesses that have a wage and dividends paid to them the information will be on the tax returns and is easily identified.

37 I agree with bringing this in line. Working more hours for less pay should not be penalised! Same way working less hours for more pay should not be rewarded!

38 People are being forced into self employment by the JCP and do not earn enough to meet the mythical national minimum wage, they would then be taxed as well!

39 Not applicable to me.

40 Self employed people vary rarely declare all they earn anyway

41 I don't disagree

42 The treatment of income for self-employed claimants for Council Tax Reduction will be brought broadly into line with those applicants who are self-employed and who are in receipt of Universal Credit. I don't understand why you are discriminating- just because one works flat out to earn ones living and pays ones taxes and the other claims self employment and UC and tax relief. no encouragement for people to work basically. For those in receipt of UC and self employed could you propose a scheme to help them get their earnings up and get off UC? grants etc?

43 paper form - answer illegible (something about tax breaks)

44 Because is to much payment garbag

### **Question 19. Comments to Part 7 Removing the Extended Payment provision (47 comments)**

1 If they have been out of work, for a period say 2 years, then any grace period of support will help them in the work place and, give them time to adjust to the financial loss....to work costs money.

2 if people are moving to work from benefits they are not likely to have savings that they can rely on before getting paid from their job which could be a month later ... this provision would help at the moment them to afford to travel to work , feed themselves and budget before getting paid, affording clothes or equipment needed to start the job.

3 Not sure

4 If the applicant doesn't have the income as yet they won't be able to afford the payments, but I believe only a calendar month is sufficient for transition

5 Keep the payment extended, give us chance to transfer into work and get used to the income before trying to screw us over, I personally am on income support I am looking at going back to work when my youngest turns 2 (his currently 6 months old) if I feel I would lose anything going to work why would I? Working people should get more benefits to encourage those who don't work to work, those with children under 2 should be entitled to normal benefits as they sit currently, after 2 benefits should drop unless you have genuine reason to not work ie disability. When you go to work childcare should be fully supplied and paid for to help support those working, transferring over to work should be completely supported leaving the claimant with normal council tax and rent reductions for at least a month, you normally work 2 weeks in advance when getting a new job, leaving people skint for the first month or 2. Take into consideration new job rules ect or else you'll have noone wanting to get a job due to the panic of not being able to feed their family or having the councils fake bailiffs bashing on the door to collect your money.



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<p>6 Look the system is broken long before it started. Lost job applied for income support which was not to start until my next pay date although I had to work a month before I was paid. For those going into Salary paid jobs (Monthly pay) - Child care paid upfront, travel costs to and from work paid, lunch costs need to be paid all before you have been paid. I was told my benefit would stop from the day I sign off and family income suppliment would take upto 5 weeks after receipt of first pay cheque. Those on monthly paid loose both ends of unemployment period - 1st claim cannot be paid until after the date of last pay cheque and stops on the day you start work. Proposal keep the first 4 weeks extension.</p>
<p>7 Why should anyone receive extra help when the are working?</p>
<p>8 The amount of time to transfer from one form of payment to another as we know never runs smoothly, so who will pay the bill for council tax again to penalise the poorest people.</p>
<p>9 it is unfair on those getting universal credit and they are generally the poorest, treat everyone the same</p>
<p>10 It does not help .</p>
<p>11 You assume too much. For example, the recent £20 - uplift in UC was not available to ESA or IC (Legacy) claimants. The proposed move from Legacy benefits to UC could still take years for all claimants to be moved. Therefore, there is still inequality in the system. I cannot support further inequality, especially as current recommendations are to wait to be changed. Besides, any claimant on legacy benefits who go to work and subsequently claim, will automatically go onto UC. Change only for new claimants!!!</p>
<p>12 This could leave the applicant in financial difficulties if they move from benefits to paid employment especially were the applicants has to work a month in advance, the extended payment provision could be reduced to four weeks.</p>
<p>13 People in this bracket need additional support and extending the discount to ensure they are robustly settled in a new situation seems more resilient. It would seem fairer to adjust UC to the CTR extension rather than remove it from the other benefits.</p>
<p>14 Keep as before</p>
<p>15 Keep as it is</p>
<p>16 Single people are already struggling to live now. They would be able to survive without food banks now.</p>
<p>17 There is a delay in receiving Universal Credit. It is not immediate. Putting the person in a position of financial loss.</p>
<p>18 The claim is this is to prevent discrimination against people on new benefits compared to old, this is clearly just a cost saving measure as the reverse could easily be done. You should be granting the same rights to people for fairness, not removing them from others</p>
<p>19 As explained in my previous. This is a personal matter to the individual and their circumstances. Maybe best to have a leverage level displayed to illustrate guideline and requirements to register themselves as such to qualify the reduction.</p>
<p>20 It will penalise those who have just moved into work and need to adjust to the changes.</p>
<p>21 I find it unfair and unwise for those in receipt of universal credit to not be considered for a reduction in council tax as some of these people may have financial struggles as well as mental health issues that could do without the stress and struggle of council tax fines. I propose that this is made easier for those I mentioned above to be considered for a reduction</p>
<p>22 I think people that are in universal credit but then start working should also have the 8 week reduction period</p>
<p>23 Applicants who are still in receipt of legacy benefits and who move into work before being transferred to Universal Credit should not lose any potential extended payment.</p>
<p>24 Even when employed, presumably people will be working for at least 4 weeks before being paid. Does this proposal take this into account?</p>
<p>25 I agree only if wages along with the Universal Credit rate is greater than that of the legacy benefit rates then I agree, as customers will stand a chance of managing to pay their way and not fall into further financial hardship. Otherwise, I disagree and propose higher wages.</p>
<p>26 NONE</p>

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27 Its not fair to reduce the tax for some and not others who have worked all their live and have to pay for others
28 Unemployed usually has same credit to pay, and same jobs You don't even get wages for atleast 4 weeks, there usually other expenses,when starting new job,travel cost,uniform etc. bills are coming, therefore council tax reduction is big help when transitioning from unemployment to starting a job.
29 When someone has been unemployed and then moves into work, they typically have to "prefinance" their first month's transport, parking etc, before they receive their paycheck/salary at the end of their first month working. With Universal Credit reductions happening once the "Change of Circumstances" is reported, an sudden increase in Council Tax due would be unwelcome and would put additional stress on vulnerable people. I agree that the current 8 weeks delay is too long; I suggest a 4 week delay.
30 its hard enough getting back into work people need help till they at least get their first pay
31 Im empolyed and have been since leaving school, so do not have an opinion
32 punishing people financially again removes incentives to get on own 2 feet
33 Again, it is worrying that certain people who are paid legacy benefits might miss out on extended payments when it is reasonable they are due these
34 this will encourage people to remain on benefits or go into UC
35 Yet again why are you hitting the poorest and most needy whilst being selective of the the benefit
36 There is a delay between acceptance onto Universal Credit and receipt. There is also a delay with appeals processes for individuals. Extended payment provision should remain.
37 When someone starts work and comes off benefits there should be a transition period of support. It is wrong to just take away support. My son had this experience and he had to borrow money from family to manage until he got his first wage. It can be frightening coming off benefits.
38 As i am still in receipt of 'legacy' benefits i would be worse off financially if this was 'approved'. Carry on as before in my opinion.
39 It should stay the same. There are no alternatives.
40 CTR should still run on for 8 weeks.
41 As I receive no benefits I can't address this point.
42 I feel those on Legacy benefits would be placed at a disadvantage, they cannot apply for an advance payment like Universal Credit recipients and will likely be placed in financial hardship due to working for several weeks before receiving payment from their employer. I propose this element should remain in place and would not be an administrative burden to do so.
43 Some Tenants have drug habits and spend all there savings payments on Drugs, they are also responsible for their bills no excuse if a debt occurs.
44 I don't disagree
45 paper form - answer illegible (something about tax for the poor and poverty)
46 I Don,t know
47 Paper form - this was left blank
<b>Question 21.Comments to Part 8 Any new claim or change in circumstances which changes Council Tax Reduction entitlement will be made from the date on which the change occurs, (rather than on a weekly basis as at present) (11 comments)</b>
1 I don't know as you say new changes may effect the plan. It must work these new changes as the safest options of the old style Reduction Scheme most Tenants paid and alot of the others are in debt some to their own, working class need some support to.
2 These people need time to adjust to any changes and a reduction plan should be arranged between all parties....not big brother putting his foot down
3 Not sure
4 The Russian say if something is not broken do not fix it so my thoughts are not to change the current scheme.
5 Seem reasonable

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6 New claims maybe but to deny a person or household's change in circumstances is uncaring and cold, it should be on a case to case basis. If Medway Council decides to adopt this option and insists there are no drawbacks then there shouldn't be any need for any increases in "administration fee, should there!
7 Overdue.
8 Entitlements is the proper way,
9 I don't disagree
10 paper form - answer illegible
11 I don't know
<b>Question 23. Comments to Part 9 Extending the backdating provisions within the scheme (20 comments)</b>
1 Not sure
2 The backdating should not be more than a month. Where circumstances change to the extent that help is required with council tax, people should be (and probably are in most cases) aware of the options. Help and advice is freely available from various organisations. The only acceptable delay should be in processing the application.
3 Payment should only be from the time of the claim.
4 12 mo th
5 If people dont apply in time it is their own fault
6 I propose that six month back dating payment of discount would be sufficient. After good cause is found for discount.
7 Not all circumstances may be relevant keep it simple
8 you should know which benefits are available, so should not take 12 months to work out.
9 Greater flexibility is a good thing
10 Its not fair to reduce the tax for some and not others who have worked all their live and have to pay for others
11 This would only give the applicant a lump sum that they do not need to pay for something that they have already used.
12 i would still limit the time to a month
13 This would lead to a possible significant increase in debt for the party concerned who are likely to be in poverty.
14 I agree with this change and believe that in cases where it can be shown that it's Medway Council's at fault the period of backdating should go back as far as as the "administrative error dates, no mater the cost. Medway Council has no qualms in holding other's responsible for its own errors believing the person/household it's penalising is at fault for not spotting Medway Council's errors! No matter what decision the cost is going to come out of everyone else's pocket's not Medway Council's!
15 Overdue
16 Eligibility is of course a Tenants responsibility. Also making sure they pay and as it happens the Reduction Scheme has helped me to.
17 I don't disagree
18 (paper form - question left blank)
19 paper form - answer illegible (possibly " the less strain upon the" ... illegible ... "righteous tabloid reader bigots")
20 I don't know
<b>Question 25. Comments to Part 10 Protecting disabled persons by disregarding Personal Independence Payments or Disability Living Allowance and providing a further disregard of £40 per week where the applicant, partner or dependant is in receipt of the disability benefit. (26 comments)</b>
1 No change

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2 Will it work,
3 I agree but i think there needs to be specification on what type of disabilities. I know people that are 'disabled' but not actually disabled in the slightest and live better lived than most of us , doesn't seem right that they get this disregard but for the genuinely disabled then most definitely.
4 Leave things along
5 The benefits replace wages or support when unable to work therefore people should still pay their way
6 Both DLA and PIP are non means tested benefits. They should never come into consideration for change, unless proposed by Westminster. The additional £40 disregard is welcomed.
7 Closer checks need to be made on people claiming PID or DLA as many people are able to work, drive a car and generally do most activities but still get PID and DLA. The people who cannot look after themselves are targeted to completed endless forms when its clear they are unable to work as their disability (mentally or physically is too severe). (Not including mental illness (caused by smoking drugs or other illegal substances) or claimed backaches that stop a person working for there entire adult life).
8 What happens when dwp unfairly takes pip or DLA away, suddenly get hounded by the council, hoping we go **** ourselves in the meantime because we can't afford it or can't stand what's happening, are you gonna provide extra support on helping get what we are entitled back and not just signpost
9 I am of the opinion that there should be deeper and more thorough checks on disability claims to weed out the fraudulent claims this could save a lot money to keep other services going
10 This seems fair to disabled citizens
11 this would benefit me greatly, remember er are real people not just statistics and numbers
12 If someone has a disability and their disability enables them to work then this should be reviewed. There are many jobs for people working from home now. Obviously people with disabilities and the range of their disabilities is vast and should not be treated as a blanket policy.
13 Its not fair to reduce the tax for some and not others who have worked all their lives and have to pay for others .its not the council who is paying for the reduced rate It the likes of me and thousands like me who have to pay the full rate.
14 Income is income whatever the source and people not entitled to any benefits are paying for the benefits
15 I do not moving to a income-based grid scheme, so cannot agree with the statement
16 At present the DLA and PIP are paying out more than ever. The definition of disability needs to be modified to not include people who can still function, but those who truly need the help of others to be able to function in their daily life. The councils and governments are paying out more and more in disability and people who could function normally appear to be entitled to that benefit. Mental health has increased due to Social Media platforms, so should we consider removing this from the benefits, or discounting them from this scheme. I believe that people with real disabilities should, but there are too many that can claim for disabilities that are not life threatening or debilitating.
17 Invariably people with disability need more room due to their disability so need to buy bigger properties. not all disabled people live in social housing or have disabled or unemployed spouses. This seems to me that those spouses who are paying their way & working will be penalised for living with someone with a disability
18 I agree with the PIP and DLA being disregarded however do not understand why a further £40 needs to be disregarded on top of this. I think £25 would be fair as this is the same as working people!
19 I agree with this completely, especially for those on the highest PIP/DLA payments and this should fully backdated to when the person started receiving the hugest rate(so. We, the disabled, get screwed over and pay out more and more each and every day/week/month/year due to substandard care and/or services provided by Medway Council.
20 PIP are awarded whether you get benefits or not and should be disregarded.
21 A person receiving Pip is currently earning and so is there partner why is this fair
22 As you have seen disabilities of certain Council Tenants as a fair few people have had their benefits changed to have a Reduction Scheme.
23 I don't disagree

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24 These benefits are substantial and should be counted
25 paper form - answer illegible ("less strain on" ..illegible ... "the better, they not the" ... illegible)
26 I don't know how to sey
<b>Question 27. Comments to Part 11 Disregarding Carer's Allowance and the Support Component of the Employment and Support Allowance (25 comments)</b>
1 You have some carers who are on income support or sickness benefits being carers for other people not even trained.
2 Leave things along
3 There are already provisions in the previous pages to account for this.
4 ***** allowance is in place of a wage. Wage earners have to pay so should be equal
5 No increase is acceptable
6 It depends on how you term cater, some claim this when they actually are well off but because they are entitled to it
7 I dont think people that are carers or get support related ESA should be disregarded from the calculation of income, as they get a low income and so should pay a low council tax rate or no council tax at all. I have just moved from the Greenwich Borough and I am in receipt of ESA (support group) and I never had to pay any council tax to the Greenwich borough.
8 The key is what slight increase means in the over hall charge of the scheme.
9 Some carers are intentionally looking after more than one person and making a claim for each person they look after.
10 It is difficult to make an informed judgement wg
11 This seems fair
12 I would like to know if this includes Special Guardianship Allowances, kinship allowance, and other payments that are received from Social Services that are for the support for children that are previous LAC's or live with other family members.
13 As previously said. A lot of these benefits are given out willy nilly. With lots of council workers working from home the face to face checks are a thing of the past. Carers allowances again should be tested. These are open to abuse. If someone has had to give up work to care for a relative then "yes". But if said person has never worked and is now suddenly "a carer". It makes you wonder. If a retired couple suddenly start claiming for their husband/wife. How is this allowed? Or their son/daughter suddenly becomes carer even though the son/daughter has never worked. There is no incentive again for people to work if they can suddenly start doing mum/dads shopping and get paid for it. Talk about easy street. How you police this I don't know.
14 What you are saying all the hard working people that worked all their working life and put a bit by if they could for their retirement to fund the scheme. How is that a fair solution.
15 Income is income whatever the source and income tax payers are paying for all benefits
16 I do not agree with moving to a income-based grid scheme
17 As per the disability benefit this should only be applied if the care is for those unable to cope, e.g. would not be able to leave the house and perform tasks around the house without the extra help.
18 For exactly the same reason as last time not all carers are paid for the care they give & have to work too by doing this you penalise those that work.
19 Should disregard the carer component of UC too
20 it read that you only would dis carers of in receipt of ESA
21 I agree with this, in my particular case, you add my daughters meagre £63/week in our household income but despite this you refuse to grant us the correct Council Tax Reductions. I believe in cases such as this should be backdated as far as said household's have been receiving "Carers Allowance" no mater the cost. Medway Council already puts a huge burden financially/mentally and physically on these households. I'm sure Medway Council will find a way of clawing it back from the lowest earner's somehow.
22 You say there may be a slight increase in the cost of this scheme

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23 I don't disagree
24 paper form - answer illegible (possibly stealing from the poor in a cunning way? ... illegible ... is sick and evil)
25 I don't know how to sey
<b>Question 29. Comments to Part 12 Continuing to protect War Pensioners by disregarding War Pensions or War Disablement pensions in full and by enabling up to 100% support to be granted in some cases (19 comments)</b>
1 Pensions can be added to which some people do and that's unfair to others
2 Not sure
3 I dont think war pensioners should pay council tax. They fought for our country.
4 Cost should not hit the people
5 I do agree with continuing this, but why should it incur extra cost when it is already in practice.
6 Why would you disregard the war pension. This is a personal matter to the individual and their circumstances. Maybe best to have a leverage level displayed to illustrate guideline and requirements to register themselves as such.
7 This seems fair
8 War Disablement pensions should be protected in full by enabling up to 100% support to be granted in some cases. There sh
9 Because these group of individuals put their lives in danger in other to serve and "protect king and country"
10 Income is income whatever the source
11 The armed forces is a choose you make, many people are injured in there line of work, but do not get the same treatment, is this because there is no glory just working for a living. so the disability side is ok but why another pension for doing a job of work?
12 I do not agree with changing the scheme, so i think we should keep it the same
13 not happy to pay more
14 War pensioner's fought for this damn country, they deserve all and any support from their Governments and Local Authorities. This should automatically be extended to ALL pensioners requiring additional financial support, as they paid into a tax and national insurance scheme all their working lives only to get screwed in the end.
15 I agree
16 Discounts should be given to war pensioners as a sign of respect
17 I don't disagree
18 paper form - possibly "any further strain for poor war-veterans is as wrong as" .. illegible
19 I don't know
<b>Question 30. Any other comments on the proposed scheme (94 comments)</b>
1 N/A
2 I feel that it is a sensible change to the CTR. I'm a disabled parent with a disabled child and currently I would have no idea if my reduction is correct!
3 The Council Tax should be affordable to all working and non working residents. Medway Council expect too much from the residents and don't give enough to warrant all the increases
4 Single people seems to h been forgotten in this new plan. I work and therefore under this new proposal I could end up paying all of my council tax. As a, single person I have no support but could end up paying the same as a couple.
5 Its a good idea
6 Seems a sensible option0
7 perhaps more in depth detail.

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8 be more patient on people who are struggling with council tax don't just chuck it out to the bailiff we pay tax on absolutely everything if your looking to put costs up so is everyone else except employers so its not easy out there

9 It sounds like good responses to problems from people who did not pay Council Tax, but also has ideas of helping Council Or other Tenants in households, as generally I feel that alot of problems of some council Tenants even who had a Reduction Scheme should have no excuses for not paying their council Tax, working class pay their Rent and council Tax without help from The social security, but covid has put alot of people onto Universal credit which I feel have curbed rent arrears for myself.

10 Are low-income households low income because of choice or because of specific health/medical related issues or genuine issues. For those claiming JSA over the past 2 years and on and off for the last 10 years and is fully abled and could easily get a job but doesn't, do i think they should get lots of help...no if anything they should be charged more. It is encouraging negative behaviour for certain groups and more thinking needs to be done to under stand those that this new scheme could support in the low income area. When a mention of additional costs or savings is made, it is impossible to sit here and say whether I agree or not when I have no idea what these figures are. Anything that increases costs to the scheme should come from any savings made from the scheme, basically juggling the money around in a different so it is proportioned slightly differently. If you provide the figures and asked me new or old scheme I would be able to be very clear, this is a very hypothetical question. If it is going to cost £1 extra I don't mind, if anything over £5000 or over no i don't want it. I would also be interested to know how much the council benefits from this potential change or non change. I think you have to also take into consideration the external financial factors at play here, I am a full time employee and work hard for my money for me and my family. In the last few months we have seen an increase to National Insurance, Council Tax, Petrol, Gas, Electricity and that is just to name a few things, the cost of living is turning into a joke and the rate of inflation is exceeding earnings. The council doing something now that could potential cost the council more is not a good idea, if this scheme is to go forward an huge amount of more work will be needed to make it fair as the information provided here is wishy washy. I do fear it is only a matter of time till the people start to revolt, there is so much negativity about Medway Council as every other council faces but Medway does get it particularly bad and things like this could cause serious issues and there will be some questions. Why does this have to happen now? We are dealing with a pandemic that has been completely mishandled and the public are effectively paying for the mistakes being made by the people that lead us. If you are going to create something new, rip the old up completely and start with a new innovative fresh approached, that actually is realistic with the realities particularly of those low income earners. Do something that clearly helps people and get them onside rather than another change that will jsut take more more and cause more aggro, lessons need to be learnt.

11 More help for carers and their disabled partners who have very low income or are claiming universal credit is paramount to this scheme.

12 The scheme should be designed to ensure that people who are on a low income have the means to pay what is required without having to sacrifice essential items from their budget. Many working families have higher outgoings than the amount of income they have coming in because of high rental costs in accommodation and the various costs of living so the income brackets need to be clearer and calculated appropriately.

13 If the scheme is implemented as explained,I believe that there is a level of fairness to all those who would be affected.

14 None

15 It makes sense to rationalise the support available to reflect the Universal credit regulations re benefits.

16 I agree that those on benefits get help with council tax,which is fair.

17 All good

18 From what is set out here I believe the proposed changes provide for a more streamlined and fairer system.

19 It seems logical.

20 Not sure things changing all time

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21 Should the administration savings not be used to benefit the vulnerable rather than increasing the council tax for others?
22 They should change the current scheme to support low - income households .
23 The scheme is in place to help those in need, some might need more support some will need less, I strongly believe it is a very individual situation and its about the best possible outcome for one particular household that could be so different from another household
24 I think that the amount of council tax that we pay at present is high enough. I cannot afford to pay any higher
25 As pensioner we are on a low income ,basic pension
26 As stated in previous comments, take into consideration those transferring over to work from being on benefits
27 In general I think this scheme is a good thing.
28 It appears to me that the theme of these changes are making the administration simpler but you will never please everyone
29 Support of disabled, medically ill and unemployed is of utmost importance. Any change that supports these things will be of benefit.
30 Overall it sounds more efficient and fairer to those most disadvantaged.
31 This exercise is not very effective. One cannot be sure how it will affect an individual. It is a paper exercise to fulfil your legal obligations
32 These changes should of been made earlier as the current scheme was way out of touch with current circumstances
33 I have failed to see how it affects me as I am a pensioner and have no other income sources. But I see how it could affect those on benefits.
34 On a limited income it can be hard to keep up with payments, especially living alone.
35 There seems to be a lot of changes to introduce in one go next April. The council might consider a phased introduction over a longer period - say 3 years - to minimise problems and hardship for those affected.
36 No comment
37 I think the more money someone earns then the more council tax they should pay. The people with the lowest income should pay the least council tax, or none at all.
38 Consider these changes to the present scheme make sense as they simplify the 'minefield' of the existing scheme and hopefully should make it easier for both claimants and employees to administer
39 The key words are targeted support and administration savings, we are not here to make your administration savings that is an internal council matter and not the concern of poor people, who need all the support one give us. I see no appreciable gain in the bring the scheme into fruition.
40 Some of the schemes yes but some big no. Too.
41 All very well including everyone in low income households, however there are many so called low income households where everyone smokes, drinks, drive excessively big cars and have a diet of takeaways. No prove is required to show where the payments are going to, however if you are a severe learning disabled person unable to walk, poor communication skills and needs care they have to provide receipts for every payment they make i.e. to day centre, outings to swimming pool, bowling etc. Most don't smoke or drink to excess and are unable to drive.
42 At the end of the day the Council does what it wants disregardles of what public opinions are and how the disabled and poorer public are really affected..
43 I agree with the scheme as long as it is going to save money and weed out all the false claimants. I also think families with more than 3 children should have there child allowance taken into account.
44 I'm dubious if this is solely to collect more cash of those that least afford it to maximise your coffers
45 n/a
46 Any move by the council to cut waste and use taxpayer money wisely is to be commended.
47 Changes are inevitable, provided no one is much worse off, the changes are appropriate.



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48 Going by the many years I have been a house owner, paying my way through society and having gained a great deal of experience and knowledge, knowing the system is by no means perfect, thus having all walks of life and conditions, it is apparent that changes need to be modelled for the better and enhanced as time moves on. Considerations need to be made more personal than a number, hence the "portal system", where the administration can be controlled to a minimum with less to no paper with the exception to the older generation "70+". level up the playing field so no one feels excluded, however circumstances need to be met. The scheme needs to be fairer and balanced. Utilise and embrace today's and tomorrow's technology to move the administration to be smarter and not harder.
49 The current changes should not interfere with the level of works council is providing.
50 If it means more help for low income families, then any proposed changes seem like a good idea. With the recent withdrawal to universal credit and the minuscule increase in other benefits each year (compared to the cost of living always rising, and more so if you're disabled and not able to work at all), major changes to council tax that mean people are worse off would only come as a massive stress and panic to people. Any easier system and less complicated way of applying sounds like a positive.
51 If the new scheme were to be implemented i would like more checks on low income families, that they do not receive any undisclosed income so that genuine claimants are looked after, as some who claim hide a bigger income.
52 There should be a discount for working people on a low income who receive working tax credit
53 N/A
54 Any proposed changes to the current scheme will be welcomed if it genuinely helps those most in need.
55 Please see my first comment (question 3) I would have preferred worked examples for the three models for each of the group's to allow me to make a fully informed decision.
56 I feel very cynical regarding changes to existing policies. I don't feel this survey was necessarily easy to follow. I simply cannot afford any increase in council tax. My cynical brain tells me that changes rarely equate to savings for the general public.
57 please please consider people and their circumstances
58 How are the saving going to be spent?
59 The council should be supporting more old age pensioners than any body else They even now have to find extra money to pay their TV licence. more out of their saving.
60 comments: as funding could be reduced on non essentials without seriously having a negative effect on the overall spending.
61 If it helps people and makes the process easier then it sounds ok. As long as it protects the most vulnerable. That is important.
62 There needs to be a reduction in all benefits as the country has become benefit dependent generally
63 If it changes it will be exactly the same people who are on a lower income will still be in the same situation
64 Any new scheme will get up some ones nose.
65 Overall, the changes look good and the team is commended on all efforts thus far.
66 I firmly believe we should keep the current scheme and be smarter with how we run it.
67 It seems very complicated to me.
68 What about the other pensioners? There is no mention about them. Will they still be rolled into the same working payments, or will they be protected?
69 Band 6 is too low and the earnings threshold should be circa £315 for a single person in line with the minimum wage
70 COST CUTTING MONEY PINCHING PUNISHING THE POOR AND LOW PAID
71 The system needs to be faire the customers who are hard up and on certain benefits have not got a lot of spare money to pay council tax the system need to be more flexible
72 I'm in favour of streamlining any service and making it better. But at this time any changes can't be at the cost of higher outlays.The money spent on admin could be used elsewhere.
73 none

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74 I don't agree overall with the income grid you are proposing to use as I don't think it is fair to categorise couples and lone parents together, and as I've explained, my own children will be worse off with what you propose.
75 Making processes more consistent with other aspects (e.g. benefits) will make it easier in terms of administrative tasks and customers' understanding. However, issues with the original things may continue going through and not actually being solved, so this should be beared in mind and steps taken to rectify these. People who are most likely to be affected negatively should be considered more than just low income households. There needs to be a wider approach in encouraging more people into work and being able to afford paying their council tax than relying on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
76 as long as it protects low earning incomes and the most vunerable it appears to address these issues
77 There are many aspects of these changes which are positive despite the overall ethics of targeting the poorest acknowledged above. The overall tax burden on people at present highest since 1950s
78 It seems to be a fair system being proposed and as long as it is easy to apply and easy to administer - with limited or no 'double' effort or keying in data that would be beneficial all round. Please do include those with mental illnesses like dementia and Alzheimer's disease who should be 'disregarded' as far as council tax is concerned and if living with their carer (wife or husband) the level of council tax paid would be as though the person was a single person.
79 No matter what scheme Medway Council put's or keeps in place will continue to be substandard and cost those in Ned of actual financial support worse off, whilst civil servants line their pockets!
80 "will deliver more targeted support and administration savings" translates as tax more save more cash for our brown envelopes.
81 I am not sure I fully understand why I was asked to consider completing the survey. Presumably, my age was a factor, but many of the points raised appear to relate to those receiving some form of benefits which is not applicable in my case.
82 If it's not broken leave it alone
83 The council needs to support low-income households and administration cost should be low to save finance. Simple Administration.
84 As a person who has very limited experience of benefits- this wasn't very well explained
85 n/a
86 I support the idea. No comments.
87 It seems you are only changing the council tax reduction scheme in order to accommodate for the changes in certain benefits so why change for everybody - not really sure what you mean by administration costs as we pay by direct debit so can't see any cost in that - nobody ever answers the phone in the council tax department so obviously no cost there for staff
88 I may have missed it but I assume some sort of increased payments will be made in line with the RPI or some similar index
89 It sounds like a good way forward.
90 I think people should be supported when their income is low.
91 This proposed scheme is so complicated as to be totally beyond the understanding of normal people.
92 Present scheme complex, change preferable N.B. customer completed paper form and made a umber of comments & annotations outside the main answers to the questions which could not be captured here
93 paper form probably "it is disgusting people pay more council tax less services so no austerity)
94 But a want to help for May payment garbage because is to much
<b>Question 31 . Please use the space below if you would like the Council to consider any other options (please state) (44 comments)</b>
1 N/A
2 Definitely the Single person allowance should be increased for people in Social Housing. You cannot reasonably feed/keep yourself warm, pay essential bills etc on the pittance given and pay Council tax
3 Make the reduction scheme easier for full time single parents to access and provide evidence instead of all of the unnecessary questions that you require.

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4 No one should have excuses for not paying their council Tax with or without a Reduction Scheme. Although I have spoke with working class who need some help to.
5 The single persons occupancy discount should be a separate element/section when applying for a discount because that shouldn't be classed as a benefit application (as it is now). The applicant should only need to prove that they are only occupant over 18 years of age residing at the residence regardless of whether they are working or not. If they are not working or on a lower income then they would be applying for council tax reduction in the form of a benefit which would then mean they need to share the details with you about their income, savings and outgoings. There is no need for all that information to be declared just because a person has declared they are living alone.
6 I think when i go back to work being single parent of 4 children under age of 11! I should have to only get 25% Off, i think council should help working single parents more with a bigger percentage of so they can afford to live , as currently not working i pay 39. A month but when i work 16 hours ill pay 130–140 odd yet my work wages will just replace what i get in benefit so why will i get effected massively by council tax that isnt far off the cost of a house with 2 working people? There is never help for single parents who work to provide alone. Only 25% off? But 25% more a house hold of 100 thousand a year can afford but my 7 thousand cant? Would be handy if the council Helped single parents in work with more than 25% off, no wonder people are poor
7 People that are working are paying enough in taxes and other contributions and should not be required to support others in Medway
8 Depending on other contributions made in this survey, I would think that Council should cosider other options after analysing them, after showing the pros and cons including positive benefits.
9 Lower tax amounts for poor people
10 As a pensioner, my Council Tax bill is always a worry. Any help we receive is welcome.
11 There was no benefit for residents supporting large households, including dependents and retired parents in need of extra domestic care.
12 Please make your letters easier to understand. I can never u derating them. Tell me how much I am going to receive and how much I have to pay. And stop punishing people for paying on a different date. You've taken me to court over lack of payment when I was paying it on the 16th and not the 21st. I have mental health problems and addiction and I pay it religiously when I get UC BUT its never good enough. If I'm paying it then please accept its being paid regardless of the actual date!
13 More support should be given to widowed parents, these households are turned upside down after the loss of a spouse, especially if that person was the main income provider It's a final situation with no choice where people are left with nothing after a loss but of course a different view when those left behind have savings over a certain amount
14 The present system should be continued
15 Yes i Would Like The Council To Consider Other Options!
16 Simplifying the calculations would help us understand more.
17 Look at all options
18 vet how much so called low incomes actually spend on leisure i.e. smoking, drinking, takeaways
19 What was the outlay of admin and costs when those on full benefits had 100% discount v's all the admin and costs chasing 35% off people that find it hard to pay, you end up taking some to court. If that 35% cost the admin etc what is the point, and reinstate 100%
20 n/a
21 If the council is finding it hard to fund all of it's commitments, perhaps it should look to it's events which are a non essential and being removing funding from those
22 Council should make every attempt to protect less abled and vulnerable peoples.
23 Please take a thorough look at your provision for special cases the way you have considered this proposal carefully and considered all options, this level of review needs applying to many of the financial services offered
24 N/A

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25 I think that this new scheme needs to show that it can support the working families on low incomes while also showing support for people that are on benefits or unable to work or have children or non-dependants that are on DLA or PIP or receive payments from social services for things such as Special Guardianship allowances, kinship allowance and so on as these children need to be able to live in a home that is not likely to suffer financial hardship due to lack of income or having to pay a higher rate of tax. Also is there still to be a discount if there has been adaptations made on the home by the local authority for people that have disabilities but have not been awarded PIP?
26 Try harder to wipe out the fraudulent claims which are many and blatant
27 Sack most of the staff and get a large computer, as this will happen in the future any way.
28 I would suggest that successful applicants benefiting from Council Tax Reduction should also receive allied benefits, such as Warm Home Discounts, discounted water, electricity, internet etc. It may be worth the Council entering into agreements with providers to make this easier for its most vulnerable and needy residents.
29 I firmly believe we should keep the current scheme.
30 What about the other pensioners?
31 INCOME AND CIRCUMSTANCES BASED
32 The customer who were on benefits previously did not pay council tax at all this was fairer
33 I think the council's main objective must be just to keep all essential services running at this very difficult time. If there is great changes you risk the possibility of people slipping through the system? Which can cause untold misery and more time and money to sort out.
34 council should stop discriminating people according to how much they earn we're sending everyone specially to the younger generation a very bad message so if you're on disability, benefits, UC you get off easy
35 I would like the income grid to change so my own children aren't disadvantaged. This is the problem with introducing blanket changes, rather than assessing families more individually. I don't want my own disposable income to reduce at a time when my pay is frozen and my children need more. I think it is short sighted as well because by going to university, my children will be in a better position to contribute to the economy in the future. As I indicated, the changes you're proposing are also causing me to reflect on my own work/life decisions.
36 Increase in direct grant by using xxxxxxxx to lobby for additional government finance. Current tax burden highest since 1950s; government should move monies from COVID suppliers (xxxxxxxxxxxxxx) to local government.
37 Why don't the civil servant's and elected Councillors take a pay cut to pay for their "proposed" changes and making those in need pay for it.
38 Using an income based reduction grid would be very unfair on people who live alone: work full time and do not draw benefits. Using income based, does not allow true reflection of living costs for that household (fuel to work, insurances, etc). People that live on their own cannot ask for a partner to help out with unexpected bills.
39 n/a
40 No other options.
41 No one on DWP should pay any contributions to council tax at all. Most on WDP Benefits cannot even to eat and heat properly, let alone pay Council Tax. Take many people on ESA, they may be of 'working age,' but will never be able to work through ill health. The 'Working age' badge is purely a misnomer with any government department.
42 Make the administration documentation simpler. At present it is totally incomprehensible. The amount of paper is at least one Amazon Tree. Nobody saves money by generating documentation.
43 paper form - answer illegible but along the lines of "reducing council tax for the poor, a policy of no austerity"
44 Yes but for May payment is too much for May self payment garbage

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**Question 32 . 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. (44 comments)**

1 N/A

2 There needs to be liaison with frontline Housing Officers so that they and their Estate Champions are aware of help available to keep the Social Housing Tenants aware

3 I think that that amount of earnings from savings is much too high. They were assessed at an unrealistic level before the pandemic but are even worse now.

4 Stop use use are money on the coivid sites as nobody use them anymore when u can get them from anywhere and the mps should be pay the sane not more and keep the same tax amount

5 I hope it works.

6 The current system is very intrusive and many questions that are asked are unnecessary which means many people do not actually apply for help when then need for fear of actually be worse off financially after they have declared everything that your current applications ask. I don't know how to make it simpler but possibly linking the DWP systems for benefit claiming applicants and better and easier communication between the departments would make it easier for applicants to know what they are eligible for and how they obtain it

7 Try to get work shy off of benefits and back to work

8 No

9 Update the website. It looks like it's from 1995, is confusing and difficult to use.

10 The wording is rather complicated and even difficult to understand for a resident working in a highly professional environment!

11 Self-employed person - There are a lot of industries which keep people self employed/franchaised person because it saves on pensions, taxes, sickness benefits, holiday pay etc. and because they are short term contracts or simply independent workers within a skilled industries, plumbers, electricians, driving jobs, home hair dressers etc. The old system that went along side Working Tax Credit/Housing/Council tax benefit was not great but helped. You cannot ass-u-me that if one is self employed they earn a living wage. More likely they rather do some work, keep self-respect and not be on dole

12 No.

13 I am in receipt of ESA (support group) and I cannot afford to pay the council tax. I suffer with a lot of illnesses including OCD, anxiety and depression, which I am taking medication for, but having to pay the rate of council tax for being on ESA has made my illness's worse than what they were.

14 consider some pensioners are receiving £140 week state pension, like others need support, far below the minimum wage

15 I'm not sure if I'm in the correct band, I an a registered person

XX

16 Yes. You should take the opportunity to link it to waste disposal and target households that contribute more weekly waste get an initial opportunity to adjust their behaviour (a mandatory course maybe - like having to take driving lesson refresher courses if you get caught speeding) and if they don't lessen their impact on the environment then their council tax bill goes up & their CTR reduction is therefore nullified. As a single parent household with 1 black bag and 2 recycling bags of waste per week - i find it shocking that there are two parent households regularly contributing 8 or 9 black bags of waste per week!!! and i have to both suffer the pollution consequences AND pay extra council tax so that you can clean their mess up. There is no more time to waste on this and you need to get heavy with people.

17 Gov, councils all spend spend spend to recover very little, cost at source, sometimes it's more cost effective going back to older systems

18 n/a

19 Happy for the change.

20 Just that ALL CLAIMANTS FOR ANY BENEFITS should be more thoroughly vetted because of illegal claims which costs us all more money.

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21 NONE
22 It is important to keep as much council deduction to people as possible,perhaps to save for it,recycling and garden collections could reduced yo every fortnight. Also I have noticed a lot of lights and computers left on in the buildings,true the night,school holidays etc,if that's done in the building where council pays bills for,perhaps turning things off,and other energy and money saving methods could be implemented, also reducing a carbon footprint.Regards xxxxxxxx
23 Robot bin men?
24 I firmly believe we should keep the current scheme.
25 I would just like it to fair across the board and make it easier to apply for not every body has the internet but the council thinks they do , also some customers cant do the paperwork them selves make it easier for support workers to get the the hoops ! you email and get the sorry we have high volumes of emails response and often dont get a reponse at all very stressful when you could end up in jail for non payment. your tel 01634 333222 is simply terrible
26 Thank you for the chance to have my say . It is much appreciated and makes people feel inclusive.
27 no
28 I would like to know what other measures you're taking to reduce costs.
29 Provide details about the terms and conditions of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme online, in full, when the new one is finalised for transparency.
30 Do not use the most vulnerable and or poorest as cash cows to the council
31 as long as it doesnt affect me as a low wage earner
32 The needs to be more consideration given to single pensioners who do not qualify for any additional benefits in excess of their state pension.
33 Overall it is an ethical scheme. It should be scrapped at the earliest opportunity.
34 Does the new scheme permit the single person discount for paying council tax
35 Medway Council needs to stop threatening to make their substandard "service's" even worse if it's residents refuse to agree to their demands to claw money from those who really actually need it, not including those who pump out kids to get extra financial benefits and needs. Make the rich and the higher earners, pay more and civil servants and councillors should take a pay cut and give up their discount's and perks. By civil servants I mean those actually working for/in Local Authorities such as Medway Council!
36 I think the whole benefits system needs looking at further and although most of this change will be great I think more people with have a change to 'play the system' rather the being fair to all and those whole truly need help.
37 n/a
38 I have no further comments.
39 I would like to have seen the calculation of costs proving the new arrangements were broadly cost neutral
40 This form and it's contents are too complicated for normal people let alone with mental health issues.
41 whatever is done we need to get value for money,ie road cleanersneed to sweep roads so dirt doesnt get swept into drains causing blockages which cost yet more monet to fix
42 If you are disregarding my council tax allowances I would at least ask you to maintain my roads to a full standard and the overflowing road drains already reported in a planning consultation for Bakersfield I would expect you to clear in the first 3 months of the new year. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx please action Medway Council. please get back to me in confirmation. you need to deliver results especially if you are taking away privileges. also you need to refuse planning permission to further housing in the Lower Rainham Road area as it is overcrowding the roads and facilities such as doctors etc
43 paper form - possibly "taking and stealing from poor via council tax drives down living standards which is evil given millionaire scum get tax breaks"
44 Because there IS a lot of money I need you to reduce my garbage payment fess if possible