

Council			
Report Title	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016/17		
Ward	All	Item No.	
Contributors	Executive Director for Customer Services and Head of Public Services		
Class	Open	Date	20 January 2016

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To agree Lewisham's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2016/17.

2. Executive summary

- 2.1 On 1 April 2013 the Council implemented a local CTRS which passed on the government cut in grant of £3.28m in full to 24,648 working age households previously in receipt of Council Tax Benefit. Pensioners are protected from the changes under legislation maintaining their support at least in line with Council Tax Benefit levels.
- 2.2 The end of year Council Tax collection percentage for 2014/15 was 82.90% fractionally better than the previous financial year and substantially better than the original estimates of 50% when the scheme was introduced. Year to date collection for 2015/16 is 44.55%, 0.34% below the expected profile.
- 2.3 It is proposed that no changes are made to the CTRS for 2016/17 and that the Council continues to pass on the government cut in funding to working age claimants. Consultation was undertaken with local residents, stakeholders and preceptor during August and September 2015.
- 2.4 The consultation sought views on the proposal that the Council continues to pass on the shortfall in government funding in 2016/17.
- 2.5 The majority (72%) of those responding to the consultation agreed that the Council should continue to pass on the shortfall in government funding to deliver a CTRS for 2016/17.
- 2.6 The recommendations were agreed by Mayor and Cabinet on 9 December 2015.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council agrees to:

- 3.1 Note and consider the outcomes of the consultation set out in appendices 1, 2 and 3.
- 3.2 Retain a local CTRS from 1 April 2016 that passes on any reduction in government funding, reflecting the Council's financial position following the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in November and the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement (LGFS) in December.
- 3.3 Continue to deliver additional support to the most vulnerable residents through use of the existing provision within Section 13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Local Government Finance Act.

4. Policy context

- 4.1 One of the primary functions of the Council is to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the borough and its people. In discharging this important role the Council has a specific duty to safeguard the most vulnerable from harm and to regulate access to public services and to provide social protection for those that might otherwise be put at risk.
- 4.2 As Council funding is provided through public resources (grants from central Government; Business Rates and Council Tax) the local authority must also demonstrate both responsibility and accountability in the stewardship of public resources.
- 4.3 The overarching policy and decision making framework for the discharge of the Council's many functions and duties is Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Strategy contains two overarching principles which are:
- reducing inequality – narrowing the gap in outcomes; and
 - delivering together efficiently, effectively and equitably – ensuring that all citizens have appropriate access to and choice of high quality local services.
- 4.4 Also contained within this overarching policy framework are the Council's ten priorities. These priorities describe the specific contribution that the local authority will make to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

5. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015/16

- 5.1 In 2013/14, the Government allocated a total of £25.8m for CTRS in Lewisham which was split between the Council of £19.9m and the GLA of £5.9m. The allocation was £3.28m less than the 2012/13 funding and the Council agreed to pass on this cut in Government funding to 24,648 working age claimants.
- 5.2 As a part of the local government finance settlement for 2014/15, the Government announced that the resources for the CTRS would be rolled into the Council's overall formula grant, commonly known as the SFA, from 2014/15 onwards. This means that it is no longer possible to establish individual authority allocations for CTRS. For 2014/15, it was assumed that the comparative shortfall would be at a similar level to the previous year. For 15/16, the budget available was reduced to reflect the SFA reduction for the Council for the previous year.
- 5.3 Consideration had been given to absorbing the cut in grant. The use of reserves was discounted as the majority of reserves are earmarked for other purposes with the remainder needed for any urgent one-off unavoidable expenditure. The alternative would have meant either making further savings from other services or raising Council Tax to all payers, the impact of which was likely to be in excess of the threshold set by the Secretary of State beyond which a binding Council Tax referendum would need to be held.
- 5.4 As in previous years, the scheme agreed for 2015/16 is based on the established Council Tax Benefit scheme which had been in use since 1993. However, there is one significant difference that enables the Council to continue to deliver a scheme that accounts for the cut in grant. This is that maximum awards of Council Tax Reduction do not meet the full Council Tax liability for working age households, who are expected to contribute a minimum 3.00% towards their Council Tax for 2014/15.

- 5.5 When Lewisham's 2013/14 CTRS was drafted, there were 33,875 households receiving Council Tax Benefit of which 24,648 were working age and 9,227 were pensioners.
- 5.6 The 2015/16 caseload (households receiving an award of Council Tax Reduction) has reduced to 28,294. However, the breakdown between working age and elderly remains similar at 70% (19,717) and 30% (8,577) respectively when compared with the 72% and 28% in 2013/14.
- 5.7 Although there has been a reduction in the number of households receiving support and the amount of support they receive there has been a minimal impact on overall collection rates. In fact, the in year collection rate of 82.90% for 2014/15 was marginally more than 2013/14.
- 5.8 It should be noted that whilst collection rates give an indication of how well the CTRS has worked, they are not a totally reliable indicator as there will be elements of 'won't pay' as well as 'can't pay'. So far this year 10,500 reminder letters have been sent to customers in receipt of CTR because of non-payment.
- 5.9 Unlike some other authorities the Council received no challenges to the scheme in the Courts or appeals about decisions to the Tribunal. Nor did the Council receive any complaints about the scheme or requests from individuals or support groups about changes being made to the way it operated.
- 5.10 The Council worked with the voluntary sector in the creation of the CTRS and continues to work closely with them on specific cases and how we administer the scheme. An earlier meeting with the Citizens Advice Bureau identified their concerns about the use of Enforcement Agents (also known as bailiffs). As a result we consulted with them on the development of the new protocols for the Council's internal enforcement service.

6. Council Tax collection

- 6.1 At the commencement of the CTRS many local authorities had low expectations about the level of Council Tax that would be collected from claimants in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and were concerned about the impact it would have on the Council's overall budget position. Accordingly, many authorities set low in-year collection targets for this group, some in the region of 50-60% of the amount due for the year.
- 6.2 Outturn collection results for the majority of London authorities have been better than expected with many far exceeding the initial predicted levels. As we approach the fourth year of the scheme action to recover outstanding debt from CTRS recipients follows the same format as that of non CTRS residents, in line with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 6.3 Lewisham's outturn collection results for 2014/15 for those households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction was 82.90%, having collected £5.8m of the £7m due for the year, a far better result than the 50% predicted at the commencement of the scheme. As at 30 September 2015 the Council has collected 44.55% against the profiled target of 44.88%, a shortfall of 0.33%.

7. Hardship Scheme

- 7.1 In the first two years of the scheme, a fund of £100k was made available to households suffering financial hardship as a result of the introduction of the CTRS. To ensure that funds were allocated to those most in need, Lewisham introduced

criteria based on consultation outcomes. Applicants had to demonstrate that they were experiencing exceptional hardship and be in one of three categories:

- disabled or responsible for a disabled child;
- a lone-parent with a child under the age of 5;
- over the age of 50 and long-term unemployed i.e. out of work for a period of 12 months or more.

7.2 Other applications were considered where an applicant was able to demonstrate they had suffered exceptional financial hardship but did not fall under one of the three vulnerable groups identified above.

7.3 The availability of the additional funding was promoted through a number of channels, including:

- Housing Benefit and Revenues officers briefed to pro-actively identify potential applicants and encourage applications online or by telephone;
- Member briefings in March and September 2013;
- Presentation and circulation of information during the Advice Lewisham event held in October 2013, attended by representatives of local advocacy groups and supporters of vulnerable residents;
- Briefings to housing providers and landlords in the borough.

7.4 Despite the steps taken to publicise the Discretionary Hardship Scheme, only 196 awards were made during 2013/14 from around 24,500 affected households and all applications were successful.

7.5 As part of the review of Lewisham's 2013/14 scheme, benchmarking was undertaken with other London boroughs and of the 20 that responded only 8 had created a hardship fund. The remaining majority (60%) were all reliant on using the current provision within Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act (1992) which allows councils to provide support to any households encountering exceptional financial hardship.

7.6 Although there was a limited take-up of the current Discretionary Hardship Scheme it was considered that there was a need to protect households from extreme financial hardship. In 2015/16, instead of this continuing to be covered through a separate cash-limited pot, the decision was made to use the existing provision under Section 13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Local Government Finance Act.

7.7 To date, no applications have been made under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act (1992) on the grounds of severe financial hardship however, this provision will remain available irrespective of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme decided upon for 2016/17.

8. Consultation on the CTRS for 2016/17

8.1 A consultation exercise was undertaken between 3 August and 27 September 2015. Our approach was to engage with a sample of Council Tax payers as well as those currently in receipt of CTR. This provided all those with an interest in this matter an opportunity to share their feedback.

8.2 The consultation was intentionally proportionate in approach. The proposals for the 2016/17 scheme remain unchanged from the initial scheme that was introduced in 2013/14, for which a comprehensive consultation and Equalities Analysis Assessment were undertaken.

8.3 Responses to the consultation on the proposed CTRS for 2016/17 were promoted through the following methods:

- A self-completion survey was publicised across the Council's website
- A hard copy format was made available upon request for those without access to the internet.
- A letter was sent out to 1,000 households inviting them to participate in the survey. This was done in proportion to whether people were in receipt of CTR - 25% to those in receipt of CTR and 75% to those not in receipt of CTR.
- Briefings were provided to Council Tax, Housing Benefits and Customer Service Centre staff to promote the survey during all relevant customer contacts.
- Paper surveys were made available to customers visiting the Customer Service Centre at Laurence House during the period of the consultation.
- The 'Homelessness Forum' hosted by King's Church in July 2015, promoted the consultation to almost 20 voluntary and community groups in attendance, including advocates for key vulnerable groups.
- The consultation was directly promoted to at least 20 housing associations, including Hyde, London and Quadrant, Hexagon, Pinnacle and Metropolitan with a request that they disseminate to their tenants.
- The consultation on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was communicated in the following ways: article in autumn edition of Lewisham Life (distributed end August 2015), news story on the Council's website (5 August – 28 September 2015) and sent to South London Press and News Shopper on 5 August.

8.4 The principal focus of the survey sought to clarify:

- a) Whether or not the Council should maintain the current CTRS for 2016/17, where working age residents pay a contribution to their Council Tax bill to account for the cut in Government funding;
- b) If respondents disagreed with the proposal to maintain the current CTRS for 2016/17, what alternatives they thought the Council should use to deal with the shortfall in funding.

8.5 The headlines from the consultation were as follows:

- There were 74 respondents to the survey in total, of which 26 (35.1%) are currently receiving CTR in Lewisham.
- More than two thirds (71.6%) of all respondents agreed that the Council should maintain the current scheme where working age residents pay a contribution to their Council Tax bill to account for the cut in Government funding.
- There was a slightly lower level of support for the proposal from those currently in receipt of CTR than those that were not. Of those currently in receipt of CTR, 69.2% agreed that the Council should maintain the current scheme, compared to 72.9% of those not currently in receipt of CTR.
- Of the 21 respondents that answered the question about alternatives to maintaining the current CTRS, 42.9% proposed that all Council Tax bills were

increased, 14.3% proposed that reserves were used to deal with the cut in government funding, 14.3% proposed that the Council spends less on other services and 28.6% proposed that something else is done.

8.6 In conclusion, the majority of consultation respondents agreed with the proposals that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

8.7 A more detailed analysis of the consultation results can be found within appendices 1 to 3.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Having considered the different options the Council has to deal with the shortfall in funding officers advise that the CTRS be retained in its current form for 2016/17.

10. Implementation timetable

Date	Action	Responsibility
9 December 2015	Mayor and Cabinet agree CTRS scheme for 2016/17	Customer Services
20 January 2016	Full council agree CTRS scheme for 2016/17	Council
24 February 2016	Council sets its budget	Council
March 2016	Council Tax bills issued	Customer Services

11. Financial implications

11.1 The Council set aside £23.1m for the CTRS in 2015/6 and is currently projecting to spend £21.9m.

11.2 When setting the budget for 2016-17 and beyond, the Council will need to consider :

- Reductions in the council's budget resulting from the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in November and the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement (LGFS) in December;
- The impact of changes on demand brought about by changes to welfare regulations;
- The use of any surplus balance from 2015/16 that may be available.
- The longer term impact arising from the CSR in December.

12. Legal implications

12.1 Section 33 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make provision for council tax support through locally adopted CTRSs.

12.2 Section 13A of the 1992 Act requires every local authority to adopt a CTRS. Paragraph 2 of s. 13A sets out the two principal factors which are determined by the CTRS; namely, "eligibility" and "reductions". A CTRS therefore defines the

amount of council tax paid by residents of a local authority by reference to i) those persons who are defined as eligible for a reduction in council tax liability and ii) the extent of that reduction.

- 12.3 Paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A sets out the obligations imposed on the Council in respect of revising and replacing a CTRS. Para 5(1) “For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme. Para 5(2) provides that “The authority must make any revision to its scheme... no later than 31 January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision ...is to have effect.”
- 12.4 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 contains obligations in respect of consultation. It applies to an authority when revising a scheme as it applies to an authority when making a scheme. (para. 5(5). Para. 3 requires the authority, before [revising a] scheme to, “...a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it, b) publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.”.
- 12.5 The Supreme Court Judgement *R –v- London Borough of Haringey* (29.10.14) is on point with the subject of this Report and it makes it clear that whilst consultation needs always to be proportionate, “even when the subject of the requisite consultation is limited to the preferred option, fairness may nevertheless require passing reference to be made to arguable yet discarded alternative options.” (Lord Wilson Para. 28,)
- 12.6 By way of explanation, it is stated within the said judgment (at para. 41 by Lady Hale and Lord Clarke) that while there need not be “...a detailed discussion of the alternatives or of the reasons for their rejection. The consultation required in the present context is in respect of the draft scheme, not the rejected alternatives; and it is important, not least in the context of a public consultation exercise, that the consultation documents should be clear and understandable, and therefore should not be unduly complex or lengthy. Nevertheless, enough must be said about realistic alternatives, and the reasons for the local authority’s preferred choice, to enable the consultees to make an intelligent response in respect of the scheme on which their views are sought.”
- 12.7 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 12.8 In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.9 The duty continues to be a “have regard duty”, and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- 12.10 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has recently issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled

“Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice”. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice-and-technical-guidance/>

12.11 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

1. The essential guide to the public sector equality duty
2. Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making
3. Engagement and the equality duty
4. Equality objectives and the equality duty
5. Equality information and the equality duty

12.12 The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/guidance-on-the-equality-duty/>

13. Crime and disorder implications

13.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

14. Equalities implications

14.1 In the discharge of their functions, the Equality Act 2010 places a Duty on public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic; and
- advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic.

14.2 The Council’s obligations under the Equality Duty have been considered as part of the overall consultation analysis on the CTRS for 2016/17. More specifically, appendices 2 and 3 include analysis of respondent characteristics.

14.3 A detailed Equalities Analysis Assessment was performed in 2012/13 for the current year’s CTRS. As there is no evidence to date of particular groups being impacted by the scheme and no changes are proposed to the scheme for 2016/17, no further assessment is required at present.

15. Environmental implications

15.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

16. Background papers and report author

16.1 Mayor and Cabinet Report 15 July 2015: Council Tax Reduction Scheme – consultation proposal for 2016/17.

16.2 If you require further information about this report, please contact Ralph Wilkinson, Head of Public Services, on 020 8314 6040.

Appendix 1 - Consultation report on CTRS 2016/17

Introduction

1. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) consultation ran from 3 August 2015 to 27 September 2015. This report outlines the responses to the consultation survey from individuals and also the Greater London Authority.

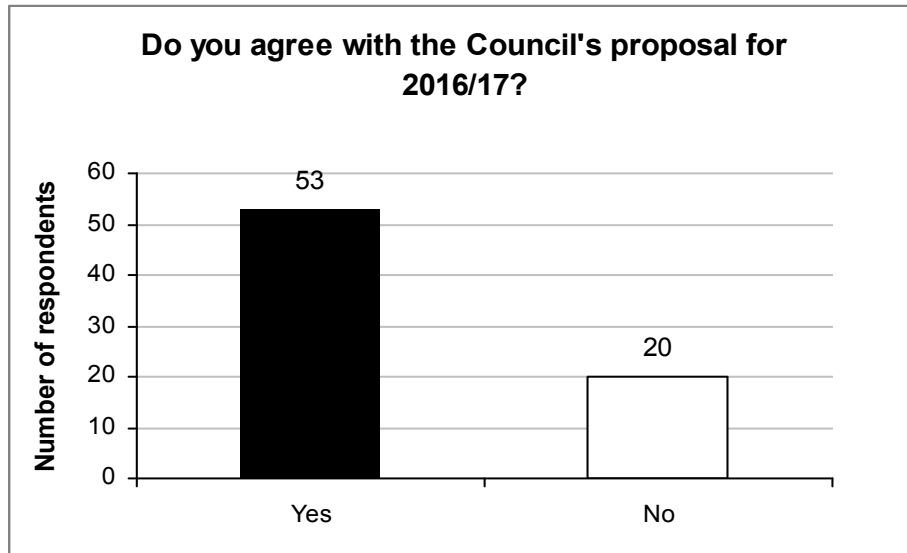
Summary of results

2. In total there were 74 responses to the local CTRS questionnaire. Of these, 53 (71.6%) of all respondents agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17, where working age residents pay a contribution to their Council Tax bill to account for the cut in Government funding.
3. The remaining 20 respondents (1 did not respond to this question) did not agree and were asked to indicate which of the following 4 options they thought the council should use to deal with the shortfall instead: Increase all Council Tax bills; Use reserves to deal with the cut in government funding; Spend less on other services; something else;
4. Of the total number of respondents 47 (63.5%) indicated that they were a Council Tax payer. Of these 85.1% were in support of the proposal.
5. Within most of the various sub-groups there was majority support for the proposal, with the exception of those that indicated that they were a student or lone parent or an unpaid carer in which case there was a 50:50 split in each category. In the 'other' category, 33.3% agreed with the proposal. It should be noted however, that many of these sub-groups are too small for their responses to be statistically robust.
6. Further details regarding the survey responses and the consultation more broadly are presented below.

Overall survey responses

7. A breakdown of responses to the questions contained within the survey on the proposed CTRS for 2016/17 can be found below:

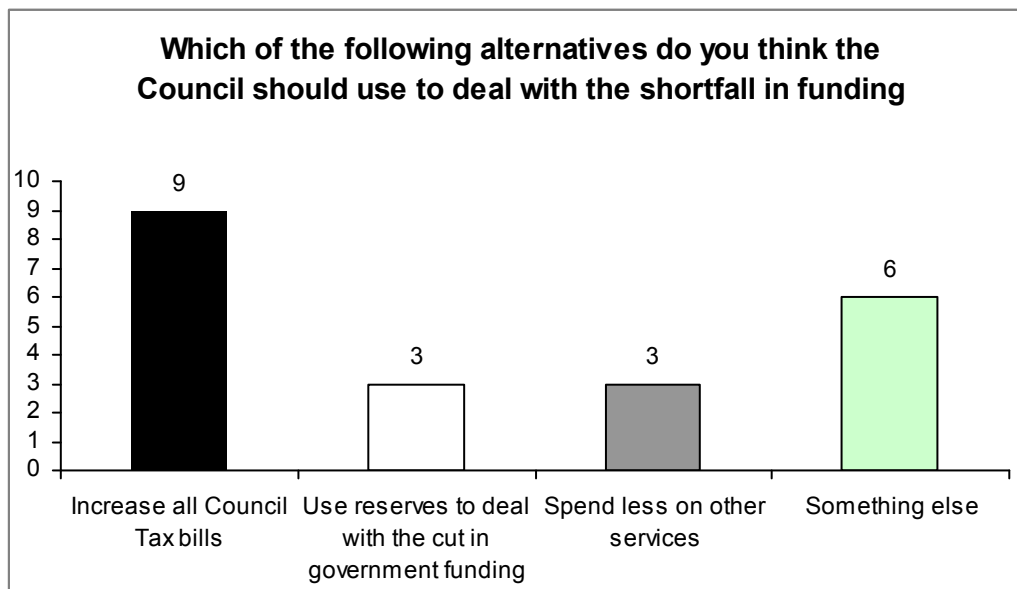
Q1) The Council's proposal is to continue to pass on the shortfall in government funding to all those of working age receiving council tax reduction. This will mean that everyone of working age will have to contribute towards their Council Tax. [Please tell us whether you agree with this approach by ticking one of the boxes below]



	Yes	No	No response	Total
% total	71.6	27.0	1.35	100
% answer	72.6	27.4	-	100
Count	53	20	1	74

8. A total of 53 respondents (71.6%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current scheme. A total of 20 respondents (27%) disagreed.

Q2) [For those that answered No to Question 1] Please tell us which of the following alternatives you think the Council should use to deal with the shortfall in funding? [Please tick 1 box only]



	% total	% answer	Count
Increase all Council Tax bills	12.2	42.9	9
Use reserves to deal with the cut in government funding	4.0	14.3	3
Spend less on other services	4.0	14.3	3
Something else	8.1	28.6	6
No Response	71.6	-	53
Total	100	100	74

9. Of those respondents that answered the question, nearly 43% thought the Council should Increase all Council Tax bills to deal with the shortfall in funding.

Q2b) If you chose Something Else in Q2 please give details

Comment theme	Number of comments
Local Authorities should make a greater stand against Central Government cuts	2
Use money raised from parking	2
Reduce money wasted, such as doing housing insulation less frequently	1
Reduce the use of long-term agency staff	1
Increase some Council Tax bills	1

Q3) Do you have any other comments about Lewisham's Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17?

10. Of the 74 respondents to the survey, 14 provided additional comments on the proposed CTRS for 2016/17. These comments can be summarised as suggesting the importance of continuing to provide support for vulnerable people, that higher earners should contribute more and that alternative ways of raising funds or making cuts should be found. Other respondents suggested that more information is required before they could express a view.

Response from the Greater London Authority

11. The Greater London Authority (GLA) – as the local preceptor - was invited to comment on the proposed CTRS for 2016/17 as part of the consultation process, and provided a formal written response dated 30 September 2015.
12. Whilst they acknowledged that the determination of CTR schemes is a local matter for each London borough (under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act), they also recognised that the GLA shares in the risks and potential shortfalls arising from CTR schemes, in proportion to its share of the Council Tax.
13. The GLA considered that before finalising their schemes, local authorities should have regard to the challenges which they will face in collecting relatively small sums of money from claimants on low incomes who may not be in a position to pay by direct debit or other automatic payment mechanisms.
14. The GLA encourages the Council to consider the introduction of revised applicable amounts and personal allowances before finalising its 2016-17 scheme.

15. The GLA states that it would be helpful for its planning purposes if Lewisham could provide an updated forecast total cost of the council tax support scheme based on its forecast 2016-17 caseload, ideally apportioning all elements between the GLA and the Council having regard to 2015-16 council tax shares. This would allow the GLA to calculate its share of the cost of the proposed scheme.
16. The GLA further states that it considers that in formulating its council tax support scheme each billing authority should both consider and address the impact of the additional revenue it is expecting to raise from the technical reforms to council tax introduced in the Local Government Finance Act 2012, which provide greater flexibility in relation to discounts, exemptions and premiums for second and empty homes. The additional revenues from the technical reforms could be used to reduce any shortfalls and thus the sums which need to be recovered from working age claimants via any changes to council tax support.
17. The GLA understands that in 2015-16 Lewisham had the following policies in place:
 - For properties requiring or undergoing major repairs or structural alterations (former class A): a 0% discount
 - For properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (former class C): exemption from Council Tax for up to four weeks since the property was last occupied and a 0% discount thereafter
 - For second homes: a 0% discount
 - For long-term empty properties: a 50% premium on properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of two years.

The Council is encouraged to inform the GLA as soon as possible if any changes to its current second and empty homes discount policies are agreed in order to assist us in assessing the potential impact on the Mayor's funding and tax base for 2016-17 and future years.

18. The GLA encourages the Council to provide it with an indicative council tax base forecast as soon as options are presented to members for approval in December or January (if not before) in order that it can assess the potential implications for the Mayor's budget for police, fire and other services for 2016-17. This should ideally be accompanied by supporting calculations disclosing any assumptions around collection rates and discounts granted having regard to the final council tax support scheme design
19. By 25 January 2016 the Council is required to notify the GLA of its forecast collection fund surplus or deficit for 2015/16, which will reflect the impact of the first two years of the localisation of Council Tax support. The GLA is encouraging the Council to provide it with this information as soon as possible in order that it can assess the potential implications for the Mayor of London's budget for 2016/17.

Appendix 2 - Demographic breakdown of survey respondents

The demographic breakdown of the 74 survey respondents is presented below:

Age	% Total	% Answer	Count
Under 18	0.0	0.0	0
18-24	1.4	1.4	1
25-29	6.8	7.0	5
30-34	10.8	11.1	8
35-39	2.7	2.8	2
40-44	8.1	8.3	6
45-49	6.8	6.9	5
50-54	14.9	15.3	11
55-59	10.8	11.1	8
60-64	6.8	6.9	5
65+	21.6	22.2	16
Prefer not to say	6.8	6.9	5
No response	2.7	-	2
Total	100.0	100.0	74

Gender	% Total	% Answer	Count
Male	44.6	46.5	33
Female	47.3	49.3	35
Prefer not to say	4.1	4.2	3
No response	4.1	-	3
Total	100.0	100.0	74

Ethnic group	% Total	% Answer	Count
White	60.8	62.5	45
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	2.7	2.8	2
Asian / Asian British	4.1	4.2	3
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	18.9	19.4	14
Any other ethnic group	9.5	9.7	7
Prefer not to say	1.4	1.4	1
No response	2.7	-	2
Total	100.0	100.0	74

Disability	% Total	% Answer	Count
Yes	21.6	22.2	16
No	63.5	65.3	47
Prefer not to say	12.2	12.5	9
No response	2.7	-	2
Total	100.0	100.0	74

Relationship status	% Total	% Answer	Count
Married / Civil Partnership	28.4	29.2	21
Living as a couple	8.1	8.3	6
Single	50.0	51.4	37
Other	9.5	9.7	7
Prefer not to say	1.4	1.4	1
No response	2.7	-	2
Total	100.0	100.0	74

Respondent type	% Frequency	Count
A resident in the borough of Lewisham	81.1	60
A Council Tax payer in the borough of Lewisham	63.5	47
A resident that currently receives Council Tax Reduction	35.1	26
A resident who has received Council Tax Reduction or Council Tax Benefit in the past	21.6	16
A person receiving state pension credit	1.4	1
A person receiving state pension	17.6	13
A full-time student	2.7	2
A full-time employee	27.0	20
A part-time employee	6.8	5
Self-employed	4.1	3
Unemployed	10.8	8
A lone parent	5.4	4
An unpaid carer for children or adults	2.7	2
A paid carer for children or adults	0.0	0
A representative of a charity based in Lewisham	6.8	5
A representative of a community group based in Lewisham	0.0	0
A landlord for properties in Lewisham	0.0	0
Other	8.1	6
No Response	2.7	2

(Note: respondents may have selected multiple options from the above list)

Appendix 3 – Survey analysis by respondent type

NOTE: The following analysis provides a lower level of detail regarding particular respondent characteristics. However, the small sample sizes in most instances should be clearly noted, and the following results are not statistically representative of this respondent characteristic in the wider population.

Responses by lone parents

1. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, four identified themselves as being lone parents. Within this group, 50% agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17, where working age residents pay a contribution to their Council Tax bill to account for the cut in Government funding. This compares to 71.6% of total survey respondents.

Responses by disability

2. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 16 identified themselves as being disabled. Within this category just over half (56.2%) agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17. This compares to 71.6% of total survey respondents.

Responses by age

3. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 16 identified themselves as aged 65+ years. Within this group, all but one respondent (93.7%) agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17.
4. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 24 identified themselves as aged between 50-64 years. Of these two thirds (66.6%) agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17.
5. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 13 identified themselves as aged between 35-49 years. Of these just under two-thirds (61.5%) agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17
6. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 14 identified themselves as between the ages of 18-34 years. Of these over two-thirds (71.4%) agreed with the proposal that the Council should maintain the current CTR scheme for 2016/17.

Responses by gender

7. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 33 identified themselves as being male. Of all male respondents, two-thirds (66.6%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

8. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 35 identified themselves as being female. Of all female respondents, over three-quarters (80%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

Responses by ethnicity

9. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 45 identified their ethnicity as white. Just over three-quarters (77.7%) of white respondents agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.
10. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 19 identified themselves as from other ethnic groups. Over half (52.6%) of these respondents agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

Responses by employment status

11. Full-time employees (80.0%) and the Unemployed (62.5%) were most likely to agree that the Council should maintain the current CTRS. All of the 3 respondents that are Self-employed also agreed with this proposal.

Employment status (base)	% agree that the Council should maintain the current CTRS	% disagree that the Council should maintain the current CTRS	% did not respond to the question of whether the Council should maintain the current CTRS
Full-time employed (20)	80.0	20.0	0.0
Part-time employed (5)	60.0	40.0	0.0
Self-employed (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0
A person receiving state pension (13)	100.0	0.0	0.0
A person receiving state pension credit (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0
Full-time student (2)	50.0	50.0	0.0
Unemployed (7)	57.1	42.9	0.0
A paid carer for children or adults (0)	0.0	0.0	0.0
An unpaid carer for children or adults (2)	0.0	50.0	50.0

Responses by relationship status

12. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 21 identified their relationship status as married/civil partnership. Over three-quarters of these (76.2%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

13. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 37 identified their relationship status as single. A little under two-thirds of these (64.9%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

Responses by whether respondent is paying Council Tax and not currently in receipt of Council Tax Support.

14. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 36 identified themselves as Council Tax payers, who are not currently in receipt of Council tax support in Lewisham (i.e. just less than one half (48.6.%) of respondents).
15. Over three-quarters (80.5%) of those respondents who pay Council Tax and are not currently in receipt of Council Tax Support agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.

Responses by current receipt of Council Tax Reduction (CTR)

16. Of the total number of respondents to the survey, 26 identified themselves as currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (i.e. just over one-third of all respondents).
17. Of those respondents currently receiving CTR, over two-thirds (69.2%) agreed that the Council should maintain the current CTRS scheme for 2016/17.