Appendix 1

London Borough of Bromley

Council Tax Reduction – Consultation Report

6th October 2016

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Outcomes

Details of the full consultation question and analysis responses, both overall and broken down, are detailed below.

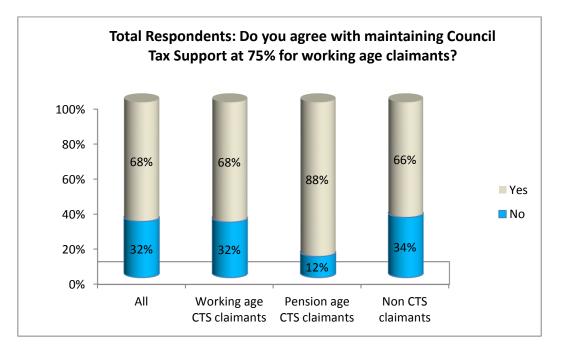
Question 1.

Q1 The Council is recommending for 2017/18 the retention of the current maximum level of support for working-age claimants. The maximum level of support being 75% of the households Council Tax liability after any discounts or exemptions have been applied. This would require working age claimants to pay a minimum of 25% of their liability.

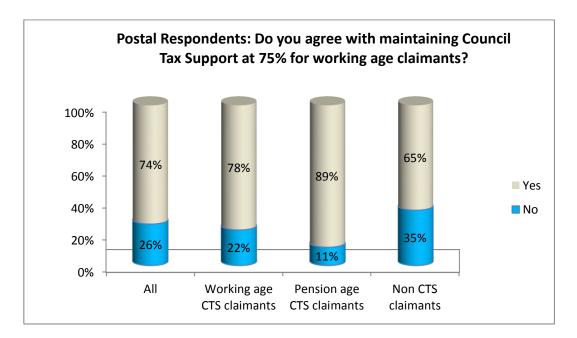
	Yes	Νο
Please confirm whether you:		
a. Agree with maintaining the assistance at 75%		
b. If <i>NO</i> do you think Council Tax Support claimants should;	S	
Pay more Council Tax e.g. receive less support		
Pay less Council Tax e.g. receive more support to		
f you disagree with maintaining assistance for working state why:	-age claim	ants at 75%, plea

Overall response.

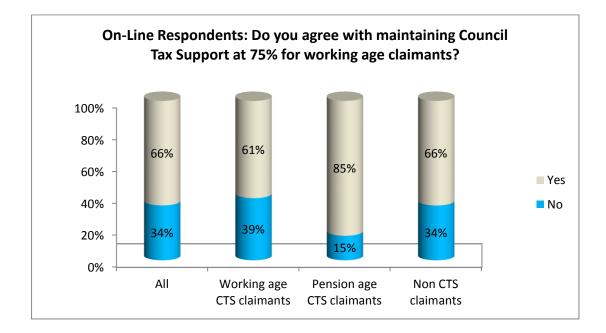
Of those who responded the *overall* outcome was that they wished to keep the scheme the same with 68% confirming this to be their preference. Interestingly the responses were weighted in favour of maintaining support at this level irrespective of whether the respondent was in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or not.



Of the postal responses received, overall 74% were in favour of retaining the level of support at a maximum of 75%. Again the result was irrespective of whether they were in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or not.



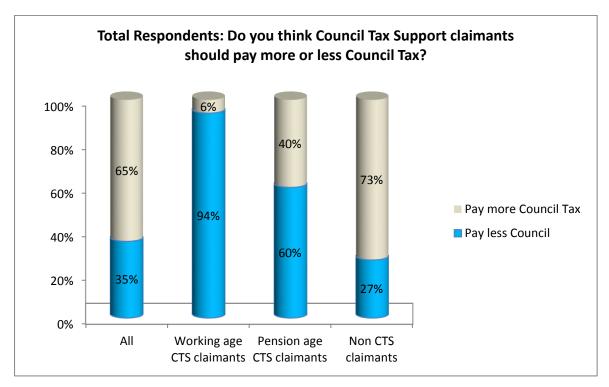
A similar situation was recorded with those who completed the survey on-line despite significantly higher numbers of respondents confirming that they were not in fact in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.



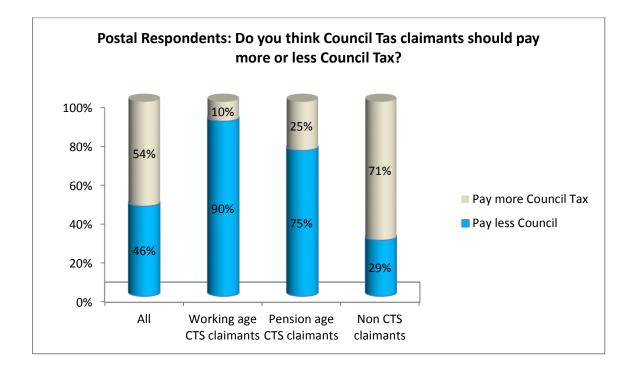
Question 1b.

Overall response.

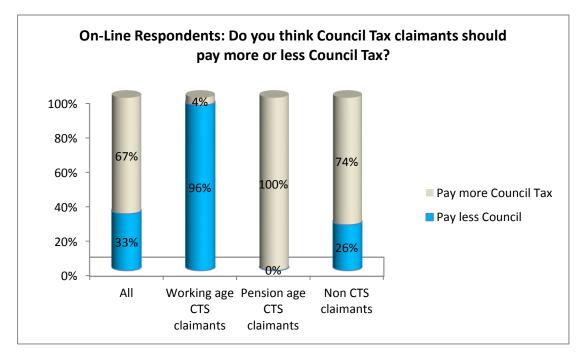
Of those who responded to state that they believe assistance should not be maintained at 75%, the *overall* outcome was that they wished to reduce the level of support thereby increasing the levels of Council Tax which recipients would need to pay. However, it should be noted that of the 65% of respondents who held this opinion the vast majority, 73%, were not themselves currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.



Of the postal responses received, overall 54% were in favour of Council Tax Reduction claimants receiving less support and paying more Council Tax. Again this opinion was overwhelmingly supported by those not currently in receipt of support.



Of the on-line responses received, overall 67% were in favour of Council Tax Reduction claimants receiving less support and paying more Council Tax. Again this opinion was overwhelmingly supported by those not currently in receipt of support.

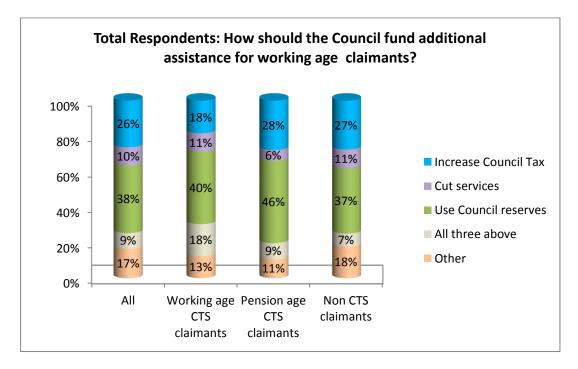


Question 2.

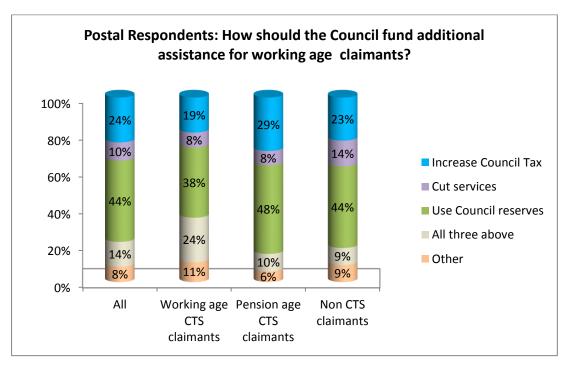
Q2	If you think that Council should increase the level of assist age people from 75%, how do you think this should be fun should the Council increase Council Tax or cut other Council the Council reserves, or all three?	nded? In particular,			
Pleas	e choose any of these that apply:				
a.	Increase Council Tax				
b.	Cut services				
C.	Use Council reserves				
d.	All three above				
e.	Other				
If you think services should be cut or have another suggestion, please write your answer here:					

Overall response.

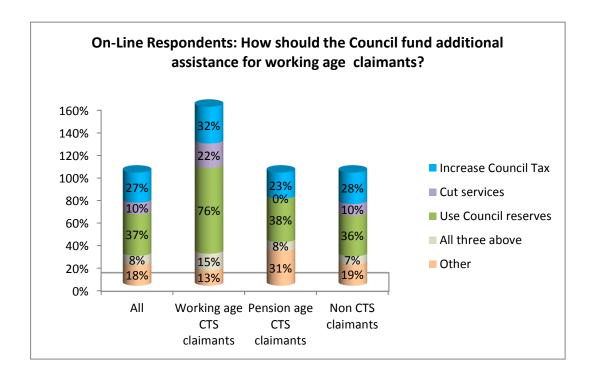
The overall response to this question was that the Council should use its reserves to fund any additional contribution to the Council Tax Reduction scheme with 38% stating this to be their preference. This question was also asked last year when again, this was the preference for respondent but, at the time, the % was slightly higher at 44%.



Of those who completed the postal survey, 44% confirmed this to be their preferred option.



Of those who completed the on line survey 37% confirmed this to be their preferred option with the highest % of respondents choosing this option being those of working age who are currently in rescript of Council Tax Reduction.



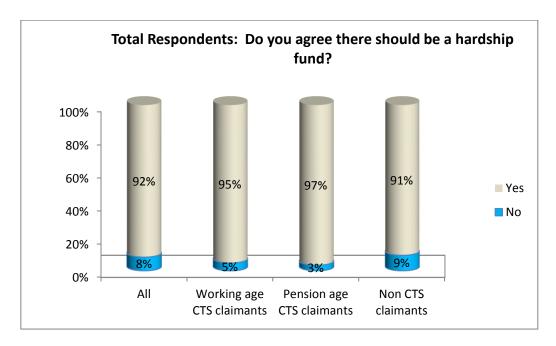
Question 3.

Q3 The Council has a hardship fund of £100,000 to protect the most vulnerable. This is to provide extra help to residents who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship and are unable to pay their Council Tax.

	Yes	No
a. Do you agree that there should be a hardship fund?		
b. Do you agree the level of funding at £100,000 is correct?		
If you disagree please write your answer here:		

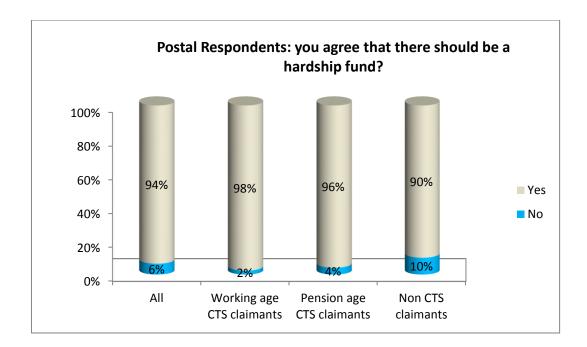
Overall response – part a.

The overall response to part (a) of this question was that, yes, the Council should have a hardship fund with 92% agreeing with this statement. This question was asked last year and the exact same % of respondents agreed at that time also.

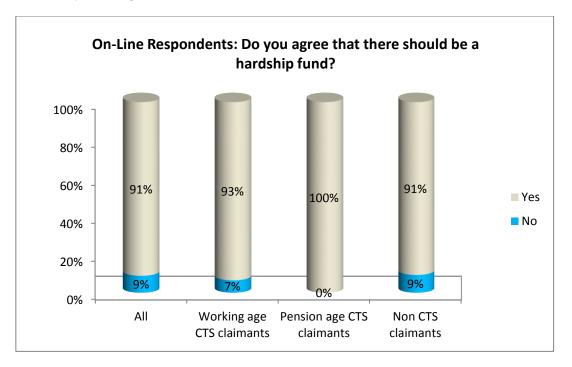


Analysis of Respondents by Survey Type.

Of those who completed the postal survey 94% confirmed that there should be a hardship fund with a slightly higher % of those in receipt of CTR agreeing with this statement, irrespective of their age.



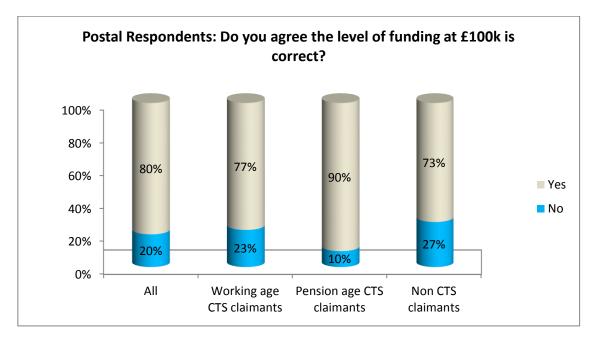
Of those who completed the on line survey 91% confirmed that there should be a hardship fund with 100% of those of Pensionable Age, in receipt of CTR, agreeing with this statement. Interestingly, only 91% of those in receipt of CTR who were of working age and therefore most likely to benefit from a hardship fund agreed with the statement, however this is a significant increase upon the same group last year when only 67% agreed with this statement.



Overall response – part b.

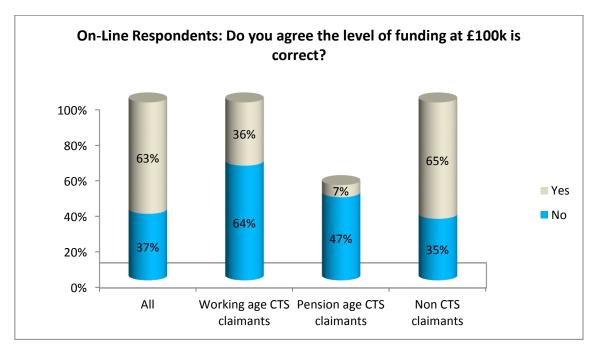
The overall response to part (b) of this question was that, yes, the level of £100,000 for a hardship funding was correct with 66% agreeing with this statement, slightly down from the 71% recorded last year.

Of those who provided further commentary 39% believed that the sum should be increased and 12% that it should be decreased. Many of the other respondents felt that they were unable to comment without any further facts and figures being provided regarding the potential spend, numbers affected etc.



Of those who completed the postal survey 80% confirmed that the sum of £100,000 was correct.

Of those who completed the on line survey only 63% confirmed that the sum of \pounds 100,000 in respect of a hardship fund was correct.



Question 4.

Question 4 provided the respondents with the opportunity to raise anything else which they believed should alter in respect of the CTR scheme.

Q4 Are there any other changes you would like to see to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2016/17 to 2017/18 or general comments regarding CTS?

Please write your answer here:

Where respondents did suggest changes, responses here fell into a number of broad categories with many suggesting the following:

- Undertaking better checks into those receiving CTR
- Increased protection for certain categories of people such as the disabled or carers
- Employing a sliding scale of assistance
- Limiting the support further e.g. to those living in the lowest CTAX band
- Helping citizens to help themselves through employment opportunities

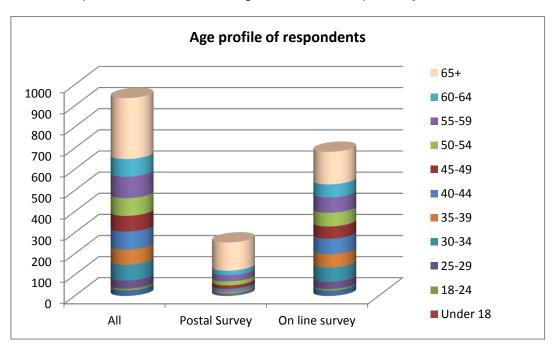
Equality and Diversity.

Standard questions relating to Equality and Diversity were included on the survey but it was made clear that answering these was not compulsory.

While 960 responses were received, not all respondents chose to complete the questions regarding their circumstances or ethnic background.

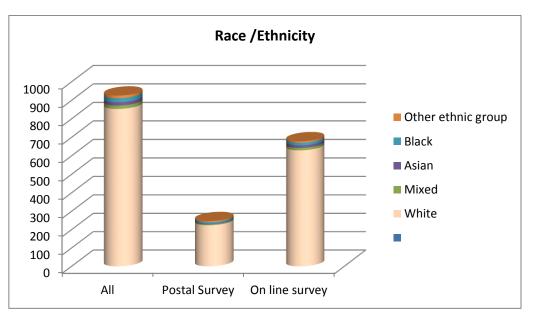
CTR Recipients.

Overall, 911 people confirmed their age with the highest volumes of respondents being from those aged over 65 years of age, irrespective of whether the survey was completed on-line or by post. The split between those in receipt of CTR and those not in receipt was almost even, being 440 and 520 respectively.



Ethnic Background.

926 respondents confirmed their ethnic background with the majority of respondents, 92%, stating that they were from a white background.



Disability and Gender.

883 respondents were happy to confirm whether they were disabled or not and 889 to confirm their gender. The analysis is shown below.

