



Council Tax Support Survey Preliminary Results

November 2016

Method	Number of questionnaires returned
Online	288
Paper - Valid	1117
Other Submissions	6
Paper - Invalid	50
Total Valid Responses	1961

This survey was open between 8th August and 31st October 2016



Council Tax Support Survey 2016

1. Introduction

The survey was conducted to receive the views of the public in respect of ten proposed changes to the Council's existing Council Tax Support Scheme. The Council Tax Support Scheme is reviewed on an annual basis and this survey outlined proposed changes to the scheme which included changes to bring the scheme in line with changes which are happening across Housing Benefit and Universal Credit. These proposed changes were set out in the context of the Local Authority needing to fill an estimated funding gap of £18.5 million between the present and 2019/20.

Explicitly stated was that the proposed changes would not affect pension age claimants.

2. Methodology

The survey was conducted in two simultaneous ways between 8 August 2016 and 31 October 2016. Firstly by means of an online questionnaire and secondly by printed booklets containing the same details from which the answers were then manually entered into the database.

The questionnaire booklets were sent out to all customers currently receiving Council Tax Support (8,387 people) and to a matching number of non-recipients chosen at random.

Views were sought on the level of agreement or disagreement with the proposals, whether respondents would be affected and, if so, in what manner.

All responses were anonymous with the only respondent specific information being a coded serial number on the questionnaire booklets which indicated whether the recipient household currently received Council Tax Support according to the records held by the Council.

In a number of cases the coded serial numbers had been deliberately removed or redacted and there were also questionnaire booklets that were passed out by Councillors which bore no serial number at all. To split these appropriately the respondents answer to whether they received Council Tax Support was used where the coding was absent or illegible

4. Preliminary Results – Summary

The level of agreement or disagreement is set out by each proposal and the results have been broken down between those respondents receiving Council Tax Support and those who do not. In each case the figures for Strongly Agree and Agree have been added together as have those for Strongly disagree and Disagree.

To obtain the percentages the denominator has been taken throughout as the total number of responses (1961). The numerator however varies according to the number of responses received in respect of each of the particular questions. It should be noted that, where questions contained more than one part, the number of responses to the individual parts was not always the same.

Q1a. For those receiving CTS 6.8% of respondents were in agreement compared with 31.5% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 40.1% were in agreement compared with 10.8% that disagreed.

Q1b. For those receiving CTS 6.5% of respondents were in agreement compared with 31.7% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 37.9% were in agreement compared with 12.3% that disagreed.

Q2a. For those receiving CTS 16.4% of respondents were in agreement compared with 18.6% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 40.5% were in agreement compared with 8.7% that disagreed.

Q2b. For those receiving CTS 12.8% of respondents were in agreement compared with 31.5% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 33.8% were in agreement compared with 13.4% that disagreed.

Q3a. For those receiving CTS 14.7% of respondents were in agreement compared with 19.8% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 31.1% were in agreement compared with 17.1% that disagreed.

Q4a. For those receiving CTS 8.5% of respondents were in agreement compared with 20.8% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 28.8% were in agreement compared with 14.1% that disagreed.

Q5a. For those receiving CTS 15.4% of respondents were in agreement compared with 17.7% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 40.1% were in agreement compared with 7.1% that disagreed.

Q6a. For those receiving CTS 15.7% of respondents were in agreement compared with 9.6% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 38.0% were in agreement compared with 5.7% that disagreed.

Q7a. For those receiving CTS 29.2% of respondents were in agreement compared with 6.1% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 49.6% were in agreement compared with 3.1% that disagreed.

Q8a. For those receiving CTS 6.5% of respondents were in agreement compared with 13.3% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 29.6% were in agreement compared with 5.8% that disagreed.

Q9a. For those receiving CTS 19.6% of respondents were in agreement compared with 19.4% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 43.5% were in agreement compared with 7.5% that disagreed.

Q10a. For those receiving CTS 7.1% of respondents were in agreement compared with 23.5% that disagreed. For those NOT receiving CTS 22.0% were in agreement compared with 17.5% that disagreed.

5. Full Data Tables – Numbers and Percentages

Proposal One: Changes to council Tax Liability – all claimants pay more towards their council tax

Q1a. How strongly do you agree or disagree that all working age claimants should pay more towards their Council Tax?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	44	2.2%	423	21.6%
Agree	89	4.5%	364	18.6%
Total Strongly agree or agree	133	6.8%	787	40.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	80	4.1%	86	4.4%
Disagree	201	10.2%	103	5.3%
Strongly disagree	416	21.2%	108	5.5%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	617	31.5%	211	10.8%
Total	830	42.3%	1084	55.3%

Q1b. How strongly do you agree or disagree that all working age people should pay at least 45% of their Council Tax bill?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	44	2.2%	409	20.9%
Agree	84	4.3%	334	17.0%
Total Strongly agree or agree	128	6.5%	743	37.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	74	3.8%	98	5.0%
Disagree	177	9.0%	120	6.1%
Strongly disagree	445	22.7%	122	6.2%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	622	31.7%	242	12.3%
Total	824	42.0%	1083	55.2%

Q1c. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	716	36.5%
No	1180	60.2%
Total	1896	96.7%

Proposal Two: Restrict the amount of Council Tax Support for working age claimants to the equivalent of a Band C property charge

Q2a. How strongly do you agree or disagree that all working age claimants living in properties with a higher Council Tax charge should pay more?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	128	6.5%	415	21.2%
Agree	194	9.9%	380	19.4%
Total Strongly agree or agree	322	16.4%	795	40.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	164	8.4%	118	6.0%
Disagree	143	7.3%	97	4.9%
Strongly disagree	185	9.4%	73	3.7%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	328	16.7%	170	8.7%
Total	814	41.5%	1083	55.2%

Q2b. How strongly do you agree or disagree that we should limit the amount of Council Tax Support to a Band C property charge?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	83	4.2%	341	17.4%
Agree	168	8.6%	322	16.4%
Total Strongly agree or agree	251	12.8%	663	33.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	192	9.8%	145	7.4%
Disagree	162	8.3%	148	7.5%
Strongly disagree	203	10.4%	114	5.8%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	365	18.6%	262	13.4%
Total	808	41.2%	1070	54.6%

Q2c. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	251	12.8%
No	1576	80.4%
Total	1827	93.2%

Proposal Three: Reducing the savings limit from £6,000 to £3,000 for working age people

Q3a. How strongly do you agree or disagree that Council Tax Support should not be paid to working age claimants who have more than £3,000 in savings and / or investments?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	123	6.3%	332	16.9%
Agree	166	8.5%	277	14.1%
Total Strongly agree or agree	289	14.7%	609	31.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	137	7.0%	134	6.8%
Disagree	156	8.0%	200	10.2%
Strongly disagree	233	11.9%	136	6.9%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	389	19.8%	336	17.1%
Total	815	41.6%	1079	55.0%

Q3b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	115	5.9%
No	1755	89.4%
Total	1870	95.3%

Proposal Four: Removing the Family Premium for all new working age claimants

Q4a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the Family Premium when assessing a client’s needs?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	60	3.1%	274	14.0%
Agree	107	5.5%	291	14.8%
Total Strongly agree or agree	167	8.5%	565	28.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	238	12.1%	244	12.4%
Disagree	148	7.5%	160	8.2%
Strongly disagree	259	13.2%	116	5.9%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	407	20.8%	276	14.1%
Total	812	41.4%	1085	55.3%

Q4b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	189	9.6%
No	1665	84.9%
Total	1854	94.5%

Proposal Five: Restrict backdating to one month

Q5a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to restrict backdating claims to one month?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	104	5.3%	396	20.2%
Agree	198	10.1%	391	19.9%
Total Strongly agree or agree	302	15.4%	787	40.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	169	8.6%	143	7.3%
Disagree	148	7.5%	73	3.7%
Strongly disagree	200	10.2%	66	3.4%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	348	17.7%	139	7.1%
Total	819	41.8%	1069	54.5%

Q5b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	103	5.3%
No	1727	88.1%
Total	1830	93.4%

Proposal Six: Self-employed minimum hourly rate for claimants after one year

Q6a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to use a set minimum income level for those claimants who are self employed?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	90	4.6%	312	15.9%
Agree	217	11.1%	433	22.1%
Total Strongly agree or agree	307	15.7%	745	38.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	309	15.8%	228	11.6%
Disagree	80	4.1%	63	3.2%
Strongly disagree	108	5.5%	48	2.4%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	188	9.6%	111	5.7%
Total	804	41.0%	1084	55.3%

Q6b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	71	3.6%
No	1749	84.6%
Total	1820	89.2%

Proposal Seven: Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Support to four weeks

Q7a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to restrict the period for which a person can be out of Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Support to four weeks?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	344	17.5%	681	34.7%
Agree	229	11.7%	291	14.8%
Total Strongly agree or agree	573	29.2%	972	49.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	131	6.7%	54	2.8%
Disagree	43	2.2%	26	1.3%
Strongly disagree	77	3.9%	34	1.7%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	120	6.1%	60	3.1%
Total	824	42.0%	1086	55.4%

Q7b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	32	1.6%
No	1823	91.2%
Total	1855	92.8%

Proposal Eight: Remove the work related activity component in the calculation of the current scheme for new Employment and Support Allowance Applicants

Q8a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the work related activity component from the calculation for Council Tax Support?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	54	2.8%	280	14.3%
Agree	74	3.8%	300	15.3%
Total Strongly agree or agree	128	6.5%	580	29.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	293	14.9%	366	18.7%
Disagree	159	8.1%	59	3.0%
Strongly disagree	221	11.3%	54	2.8%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	380	19.4%	113	5.8%
Total	801	40.8%	1059	54.0%

Q8b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	107	5.5%
No	1640	83.6%
Total	1747	89.1%

Proposal Nine: limit the calculation to a maximum of two dependent children

Q9a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to limit the calculation of award to a maximum of two dependent children?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	183	9.3%	508	25.9%
Agree	202	10.3%	345	17.6%
Total Strongly agree or agree	385	19.6%	853	43.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	171	8.7%	81	4.1%
Disagree	95	4.8%	81	4.1%
Strongly disagree	166	8.5%	67	3.4%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	261	13.3%	148	7.5%
Total	817	41.7%	1082	55.2%

Q9b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	45	2.3%
No	1785	91.0%
Total	1830	93.3%

Proposal Ten: Removing the entitlement within the Council Tax Support calculation for the Severe Disability Premium where another person is paid Universal Credit (Carer's Element) to look after them

Q10a. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal that Severe Disability Premium will no longer be included when calculating Council Tax Support where another person is paid Universal Credit (Carer's Element)?

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Strongly agree	45	2.3%	211	10.8%
Agree	94	4.8%	221	11.3%
Total Strongly agree or agree	139	7.1%	432	22.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	200	10.2%	292	14.9%
Disagree	151	7.7%	202	10.3%
Strongly disagree	310	15.8%	142	7.2%
Total Disagree or strongly disagree	461	23.5%	344	17.5%
Total	800	40.8%	1068	54.5%

Q10b. Would this proposal have an effect on your household?

	Number	%
Yes	126	6.4%
No	1640	83.6%
Total	1766	90.0%

6. Demographics – Summary

The demographics of the respondents have been broken down in two ways. Firstly, overall which covers the responses given by each of the respondents and secondly by whether they are in receipt of Council Tax Support or not.

Overall Demographics

Gender

	Number	%
Male	811	41.4%
Female	1088	55.5%
Total	1766	96.9%

Disability

	Number	%
Yes	625	31.9%
No	1197	61.0%
Total	1822	92.9%

Age Groups

	Number	%
0 to 15	0	0.0%
16 to 24	26	1.3%
25 to 34	127	6.5%
35 to 44	228	11.6%
45 to 54	407	20.8%
55 to 64	505	25.8%
64 to 75	358	18.3%
75 +	218	11.1%
Total	1869	95.3%

Demographics broken down by Receiving / Not Receiving CTS Support

Gender

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Male	341	17.5%	470	24.1%
Female	480	24.6%	608	31.2%
Total	821	42.1%	1078	55.3%

Disability

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Disabled	443	22.7%	182	9.3%
Non-disabled	330	16.9%	867	44.4%
Total	773	39.6%	1049	53.7%

Age Groups

	Those who receive support		Not receiving support	
	Number	%	Number	%
0 to 15	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
16 to 24	19	1.0%	7	0.4%
25 to 34	83	4.3%	44	2.3%
35 to 44	150	7.7%	78	4.0%
45 to 54	237	12.1%	170	8.7%
55 to 64	260	13.3%	245	12.6%
64 to 75	31	1.6%	327	16.8%
75+	24	1.2%	194	9.9%
Total	804	41.2%	1065	54.6%

Text Responses

In addition to the scaled responses on a five point level from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree” respondents had the opportunity to provide text responses to outline what impact they felt the proposals would have on their household.

There was a final provision for any further comments about the proposed changes and for other any suggestions on how Torbay Council could save money at the end of the survey.

The response level to these text options was significant in both number and length. To initially examine their content counts have been made of the numbers of times selected key words have appeared in the text responses to the different proposals and to Question 11, in overall comments. These are tabulated below followed by brief descriptions of the general sense and direction of the comments given by those in receipt of CTS and those who are not.

Q1d		Q1e		Q2d		Q2e	
strugg (le or ling)	121	poor	107	strugg (le or ling)	38	property	124
disabl (e or ed)	85	strugg (le or ling)	89	disabl (e or ed)	18	can afford	58
food	84	hard	65	food	16	pay more	54
hard	78	pay more	65	hard	11	mean	48
struggle	78	struggling	49	struggle	10	poor	28
pay more	77	low income	49	pay more	10	hard	27
struggling	43	disabil (ity or ities)	46	struggling	9	unfair	26
mean	42	struggle	40	mean	8	penalis (e or ing)	19
low income	37	mean	38	low income	8	circumstance	18
disabil (ity or ities)	35	pension	38	disabil (ity or ities)	7	low income	16
difficult (y or ies)	31	vulnerable	34	difficult	6	disabl (e or ed)	13
health	31	debt	28	health	5	reason	13
carer	25	unfair	28	carer	5	good	13
less money	22	circumstance	25	less money	5	strugg (le or ling)	12
hardship	21	tree	24	hardship	4	choose	12
limited	21	can afford	24	limited	4	not afford	11
not afford	20	food	22	not afford	4	means test	10
pension	19	difficult	21	pension	3	struggling	9
debt	18	homeless	20	debt	3	choice	9
heat	17	target	20	heat	3	difficult	8

Q3c		Q3d		Q4c		Q4d	
strugg (le or ling)	13	penalis (e or ing)	63	poor	12	poor	26
struggle	12	hard	37	strugg (le or ling)	11	penalis (e or ing)	24
hard	9	funeral	34	pay more	8	hard	21
mean	6	encourage	32	struggling	7	strugg (le or ling)	20
pay more	5	can afford	27	penalis (e or ing)	7	poverty	16
penalis (e or ing)	5	Emergenc (y or ies)	27	disabl (e or ed)	6	food	15
punish	5	poor	25	mean	6	choice	15
pension	4	mean	24	impact	5	responsib	15
repair	4	unfair	19	struggle	4	struggling	14
Emergenc (y or ies)	4	pension	18	worse off	4	low income	13
funeral	4	repair	17	low income	3	unfair	12
low income	3	reason	15	food	2	mean	11
poor	3	property	14	hard	2	punish	10
retire	3	good	14	less money	2	not afford	9
reason	3	strugg (le or ling)	13	pressure	2	can afford	9
food	2	punish	12	household income	2	small amount	9
limited	2	small amount	12	unfair	2	understand	9
property	2	pay more	11	choice	2	vulnerable	8
unfair	2	rainy	11	tree	2	line	8
can afford	2	retire	10	not sure	2	choose	8

Q5c		Q5d		Q6c		Q6d	
reason	7	reason	38	disabl (e or ed)	5	understand	24
homeless	6	circumstance	27	mean	4	hard	18
property	4	line	15	circumstance	4	unfair	12
strugg (le or ling)	3	entitled	14	understand	4	reason	12
health	3	difficult	13	pay more	3	mean	11
debt	3	unfair	12	low income	3	good	9
poor	3	good	12	disabil (ity or ities)	3	penalis (e or ing)	9
line	3	genuine	12	unfair	3	strugg (le or ling)	6
entitled	3	poor	11	hard	2	difficult	6
hard	2	penalis (e or ing)	11	impact	2	struggling	5
struggle	2	hard	10	burden	2	pension	5
difficult	2	debt	9	not sure	2	poor	5
not afford	2	exceptional	9	fluctuat	2	ridiculous	4
circumstance	2	vulnerable	8	strugg (le or ling)	1	encourage	4
good	2	mean	6	food	1	low income	3
understand	2	illness	6	struggling	1	debt	3
not our fault	2	understand	5	health	1	impact	3
disabl (e or ed)	1	disabil (ity or ities)	4	carer	1	line	3
food	1	no fault	4	hardship	1	circumstance	3
pay more	1	ridiculous	4	survive	1	punish	3

Q7c		Q7d		Q8c		Q8d	
reason	4	can afford	135	disabl (e or ed)	8	understand	67
mean	2	out of the	78	less money	6	disabl (e or ed)	20
line	2	reason	31	poor	6	hard	16
out of the	2	circumstance	28	not sure	5	mean	16
can afford	2	good	12	strugg (le or ling)	4	poor	14
pay more	1	illness	11	health	4	strugg (le or ling)	11
health	1	entitled	11	survive	4	difficult	10
limited	1	mean	9	hard	3	penalis (e or ing)	10
heat	1	pension	9	struggling	3	do not know	9
impact	1	health	8	mean	3	illness	8
retire	1	not living	8	disabil (ity or ities)	3	line	8
court	1	property	7	don't know	3	struggling	7
property	1	choose	7	retire	3	don't know	7
unfair	1	not afford	6	understand	3	homeless	7
circumstance	1	exceptional	6	pay more	2	low income	6
good	1	pay more	5	difficult	2	health	6
not sure	1	penalis (e or ing)	5	debt	2	reason	6
break	1	ridiculous	5	worse off	2	not sure	6
penalis (e or ing)	1	understand	4	homeless	2	no idea	6
Emergenc (y or ies)	1	Emergenc (y or ies)	4	unfair	2	food	5

Q9c		Q9d		Q10c		Q10d	
hard	1	responsib	24	disabl (e or ed)	42	disabl (e or ed)	130
pay more	1	can afford	20	carer	30	carer	106
disabil (ity or ities)	1	not afford	17	disabil (ity or ities)	10	disabil (ity or ities)	61
limited	1	choice	17	hard	8	understand	22
don't know	1	penalis (e or ing)	17	strugg (le or ling)	6	vulnerable	21
pressure	1	poor	15	struggle	5	mean	19
poverty	1	hard	14	difficult	5	unfair	18
unfair	1	unfair	14	not sure	5	hard	15
good	1	reason	13	health	4	all the help	14
not sure	1	good	13	mean	3	penalis (e or ing)	14
discriminat	1	poverty	11	less money	3	genuine	14
strugg (le or ling)	0	punish	10	survive	3	difficult	12
disabl (e or ed)	0	strugg (le or ling)	9	penalis (e or ing)	3	choice	11
food	0	mean	8	pay more	2	target	11
struggle	0	line	8	low income	2	punish	11
struggling	0	choose	8	impact	2	strugg (le or ling)	10
mean	0	circumstance	6	poor	2	discriminat	8
low income	0	disabl (e or ed)	5	don't know	2	shame	8
difficult	0	food	5	unfair	2	worse off	7
health	0	struggling	5	Can afford	2	line	7

Q11	
poor	77
tree	60
hard	58
disabl (e or ed)	48
palm	37
strugg (le or ling)	36
pension	35
vulnerable	35
pay more	34
mean	34
good	31
mayor	28
food	26
can afford	25
air show	22
parking	21
health	20
target	20
penalis (e or ing)	20
low income	19

As would be expected the context in which the words are used is of importance. For example “can afford” is used by respondents in the majority of cases to indicate that a different group to their own “can afford” to pay either more of what is needed to meet the shortfall or instead of themselves. Among those in receipt of CTS this generally refers to pensioners whilst for those who are pensioners it generally refers to people of working age. By contrast “not afford” is generally used by all groups to indicate that they themselves can “not afford” any additional payments.

More often than not text responses have been from those in receipt of CTS detailing that they are already in difficult circumstances and the reasons why they would struggle to find the money needed to pay any more.

Exceptions to this

Proposal 3 (Reducing the savings or investment limit) where both groups frequently commented that the £3,000 proposed was not enough to cover the cost of a funeral, property repairs or household emergencies. Also noted was that the government had consistently encouraged saving to fund old age and retirement. Those in receipt of CTS additionally stated that funds were needed for those purposes and also for deposits and fees if they were to move or try to purchase a property.

Proposal 5 (Restricting backdating) where those not in receipt of CTS stated that there was no perceivable reason for such a long period as at present. Those in receipt commented that the longer period was needed to deal with the length of time the council took to process claims.

Proposal 6 (Minimum hourly rate for self-employed). Both groups had divided opinions on this. On the one side was the judgement that the self-employed earned far more than was declared and could easily afford more. The opposing view held that self-employment did not guarantee even the minimum wage on a permanent basis. Both suggested that it would be hard to assess the level of income without strict checks and some advanced the suggestion of means testing.

Proposal 7 (Length of absence from GB). This was one of the few proposals on which both groups were in general agreement citing their opinions that lengthy periods of absence equated to having the capacity to pay more or all of the council tax due. Combined with this were comments that cases would need to be decided on their own merits as there were some acceptable reasons for being out of GB for extended periods – family illnesses overseas being the main one.

Proposal 9 (Limiting allowance to maximum of two children). This was another where both groups tended to agree that having children was a personal choice and that the responsibility for funding them rested with the parents rather than the council or state. A lesser number on both sides pointed out that having a greater number of children could precede the “hard times” which made claiming CTS necessary in which case the restriction could be unfair. Among those not in receipt of CTS was a widely held view of benefit claimants having more babies in order to claim extra benefits or better housing.

Proposal 10 (Removal of Severe Disability Premium). The majority of comments made by both groups were along the lines that those who were (genuinely) severely disabled needed all the help that they could get and that removing this was not a choice that they agreed with.

The further comments (Q11) noted several areas where it was felt more had already been “wasted”. These included palm trees, the Air Show and the continued office of Mayor. Others suggested that the overall thrust of the proposals would “penalise” the poor, vulnerable and disabled the hardest and for that reason they were not in favour of them.

Given the number and size of the text responses the above analysis can only be a very brief synopsis of the nature of their content.