

Appendix A

Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Proposals

Introduction

East Suffolk Council is proposing a change to its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. If implemented, this would mean people claiming Universal Credit would not see a change in the amount of council tax they have to pay unless their weekly income changes by more than £15, or £65 in a month.

The purpose of the change is to provide people claiming Universal Credit more certainty over their Council Tax bills and their finances.

This consultation is open until Sunday 3 November. Feedback will then be considered before a final proposal is given to councillors in early 2020.

If agreed, the change would come into effect from April 2020. The proposed change would not apply to people who have reached state pension age or are not on Universal Credit.

(For information, for Universal Credit customers East Suffolk intends to change when it assesses entitlement to Council Tax Support from DWP notification that a UC claim has been made to when DWP notifies the actual award. The effect of this is to avoid correcting awards, whilst ensuring they are correct first time, which is seen as beneficial for customers and does not have any financial impact.)

1. Do you agree that the council should freeze the level of council tax Universal Credit claimants pay, unless their income changes by more than a set amount (e.g. £15 per week)?

Strongly agree

Agree

Don't know

Disagree

Strongly disagree

2. The council is proposing that council tax will only be reassessed for Universal Credit claimants if council tax support changed by more than £15 per week. This amount is based on the results of a review about the ability of Universal Credit claimants to pay their Council Tax when their income changes. Do you agree that this is the right figure?

Yes

No

3. If you said no to question 2, what do you think a more appropriate income change amount would be? If so, please tell us why.

£5

£10

£20

£25

Other (please specify)

4. If changes in people's income is consistently less than the agreed amount (currently £15 is being proposed), they may pay more council tax over the course of the year compared to if they were reassessed. Therefore, should the council be able to choose to not apply the new income change rule and recalculate somebody's council tax bill during the year.

Yes

No

5. Any other comments?

6. Do you live in East Suffolk?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

7. Do you currently or have you ever claimed Universal Credit?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

8. Any other comments?