

1 Consultation

1.1 A consultation exercise on the current scheme’s discretionary areas was conducted over the period 12 November 2014 to 11 December 2014 and advertised in a press release. An on-line survey form was placed on the Council web-site and consultation forms were available at the Contact Centre, District Housing Offices and libraries. Information was also sent to members, precepting authorities and various third sector agencies.

1.2 Summary of Responses

- a) A total of 15 responses were received. 5 were completed on line and 10 written responses received.
- b) 14 responses were completed by individuals with 1 indicating they were completing on behalf of an organisation.

1.3 Responses to the Three Discretionary Areas

I. Ability to Increase the standard Extended Payment Period of 4 weeks.

| Question 1 on the consultation form: | | |
|--|---|---|
| Discretionary element | Proposal | Responses |
| The ability to increase the standard extended payment period of 4 weeks given to people after they return to work when they have been in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit for at least 26 weeks. | The Council proposes that the existing 4 week standard extended payment should remain unaltered. Do you think this is reasonable? | 15 responses. 10 said it was reasonable, 2 said it was not. 3 said “don’t know”. |
| | If you indicated no to the above, please outline what you consider the period should be? | Of the 2 who thought it was not reasonable, 1 opted for a period of 6 weeks and 1 for 8 weeks |

II. Discretion to increase the amount of War Disablement and War and War Widows Pensions which will be disregarded when calculating income.

| Question 2 on the consultation form: | | |
|---|--|--|
| Discretionary element | Proposal | Responses |
| Discretion to disregard part or the whole amount of War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions when calculating income. | The Council proposes to continue to disregard all of this income, as it is currently disregarded | 15 responses. 9 said it was reasonable, 1 said it was not. |

| | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| | for Council Tax Reduction. Do you think this is reasonable? | <i>5 answered "don't know"</i> |
|--|---|--------------------------------|

III. Ability to backdate the application of Council Tax Reduction Awards for more than the standard period of 3 months prior to the claim.

Question 3 on the consultation form:

| Discretionary element | Proposal | Responses |
|--|--|--|
| The ability to back date the application of Council Tax Reduction awards for customers for more than the standard period of 3 months prior to the claim. | The Council proposes to keep the maximum back date available to the 3 month statutory period. Do you think this is reasonable? | <i>15 responses. 9 said it was reasonable, 6 said it was not. 0 answered "don't know"</i> |
| | If not, what period do you think is reasonable? | <i>Of the 6 who thought it was not reasonable, 1 opted for a period 6 months, 4 for 12 months and 1 did not offer a suggestion and indicated they would need more information before doing so.</i> |