

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	COUNCIL	
DATE OF DECISION	1 February 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Review of Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Jane West – Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer	
LEAD OFFICER:	Catherine Black- Head of Payments, Revenues, Benefits and Debt	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Jason Cummings Cabinet Member for Finance	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	All	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval to make changes to Croydon’s Council Tax Reduction (Support) Scheme (CTS) which will take effect from 1 April 2023.
- 1.2** The Executive Mayor is scheduled to consider recommendations at the Cabinet on the 25 January 2023. If agreed, they require consideration and approval by full Council. This report and appendices summarise those decisions.
- 1.3** If not agreed or amended at the Cabinet meeting, an update on the proposed recommendations will be given at this council meeting or provided in an additional supplementary paper.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in this report and report to Cabinet (Appendix 1), Council is asked to:

- 2.1** Agree changes to Croydon’s Council Tax Support Scheme following review and due regard to the statutory consultation feedback. The new scheme will take effect from 1 April 2023;
- 2.2** To agree to remove the minimum income floor for disabled working claimants, change the amount the income bands are to be increased to match the increase in Council Tax and to introduce non-dependant deductions for disabled not working

claimants, excluding cases where the non-dependant is in receipt of carers allowance for the claimant;

- 2.3 To agree The Council's Council Tax Support Scheme is amended subject to the changes made following the consultation, from 1 April 2023; and,
- 2.4 To agree that Cabinet annually reviews the CTS Scheme, the principles of the income banded scheme and the addition of a hardship fund in August 2023 and then annually.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended, the Council was required to agree a local Council Tax Support scheme for working age residents who were on no or low income. The scheme replaced the Council Tax Benefit scheme which was administered by Local Authorities on behalf of the Department for Work and Pension.
- 3.2 The local scheme originally introduced on 1st April 2013, was reviewed last year, and changed to an income banded scheme from 1st April 2022. The scheme should be reviewed each year to ensure that it is an effective local Council Tax Support scheme, which will provide continued support to Croydon's most vulnerable residents and residents who are most in need of support.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 A Cabinet report on the CTS Scheme is going for consideration and agreement at the 25 January Cabinet, and if agreed, the recommendations are being presented at the 1 February Council meeting for consideration and agreement.
- 4.2 The full background and details are detailed in the report at Appendix 1.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 As detailed in the attached (Appendix 2 Consultation Responses Report).

6 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The recommended changes will contribute to the Council priorities detailed in the Executive Mayors business plan. It will help the council balance its books, specifically supporting the priority of getting a grip on the finances and making the council financially sustainable.

- 6.2** By providing additional savings it will contribute to achieving a balanced budget and by changing the rate at which the income bands are increased it will make the scheme more sustainable in the future by managing the increased costs of CTS.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Finance Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Legal Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

7.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Equalities Implications as detailed in the original Cabinet report, at Appendix 1.

8 APPENDICES

- 8.1** 1. Review of Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 report to Cabinet
- 8.2** 2. Consultation Responses Report
- 8.3** 3. EQIA

9 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 N/A