

**Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24
Consultation Report
Published**

“You Said, We Listened”



Introduction to this consultation

1. This report contains the responses we received for the Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 consultation which took place between 15th August 2022 and 30th September 2022.
2. The exercise was performed to gain the views of residents on the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for the 2023/24 financial year.

Methodology

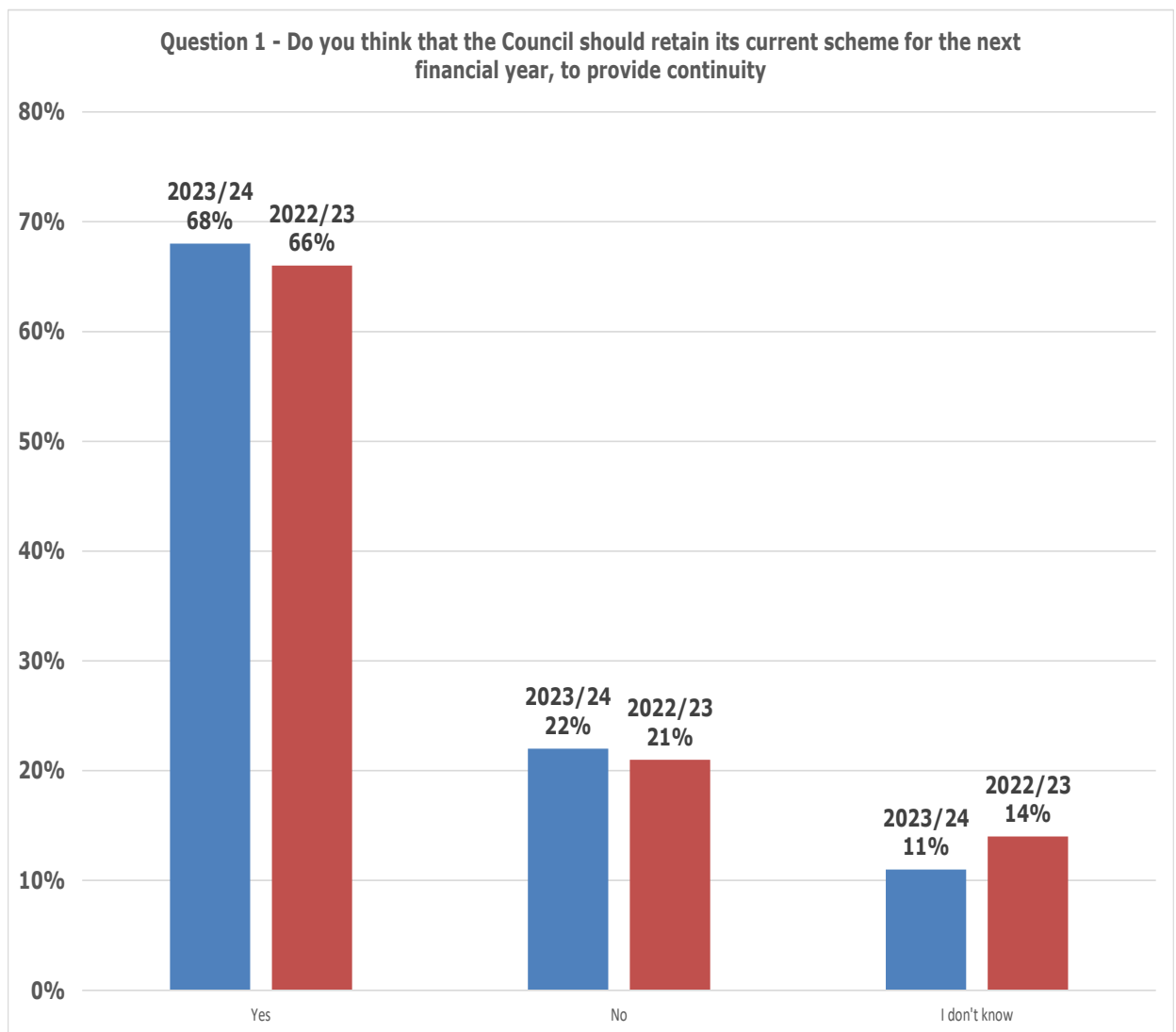
3. The consultation, which was available in both hard copy and online, was promoted in a number of ways.
 - A media release was circulated announcing the proposals for the Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24. The media release also provided residents with details of the consultation exercise being undertaken and details of how to complete or request a copy of the consultation.
 - A letter was forwarded to precepting Authorities on 15th August 2022, inviting them to give their views on the proposals for 2023/24.
 - Social media; Facebook and Twitter were also used to inform residents that the consultation exercise was being undertaken.
 - A homepage banner was placed on Boston Borough Council's website to draw attention to the consultation.
 - Paper questionnaires were made available on request.
 - An email was sent to 54 groups that represent those individuals with the characteristics identified in the Equality Act. A few of these are listed below:
 - Lincs Care Leavers
 - Disability Lincs
 - Victim Support in Lincolnshire
 - Age UK Boston & South Holland
 - Alzheimer's Society
 - Deaf Association
 - British Heart Foundation
 - Lincs YMCA
 - ME Lincs
 - Citizens' Advice mid Lincs
 - Boston Salvation Army
 - Boston United Disabled Football Club
 - Edan Lincs (Domestic Abuse)
 - Lincolnshire Rural Support Network
 - The questionnaire was also made available for people to complete on Boston Borough Council's website.
4. It should be noted that base data has been rounded to the nearest number (so may add up to between 99% and 101%). It should also be noted that numbers detailed in brackets may not always add up to 87 due to some respondents only choosing to answer certain questions. Where available this report details comparisons with the previous consultation.
5. A copy of the consultation is included at the end of this report.

Response Rate

- 87 electronic responses were received.
- In addition, written responses were received from Lincolnshire County Council and the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner. Their responses are detailed at numbers 9 and 10 in this report.

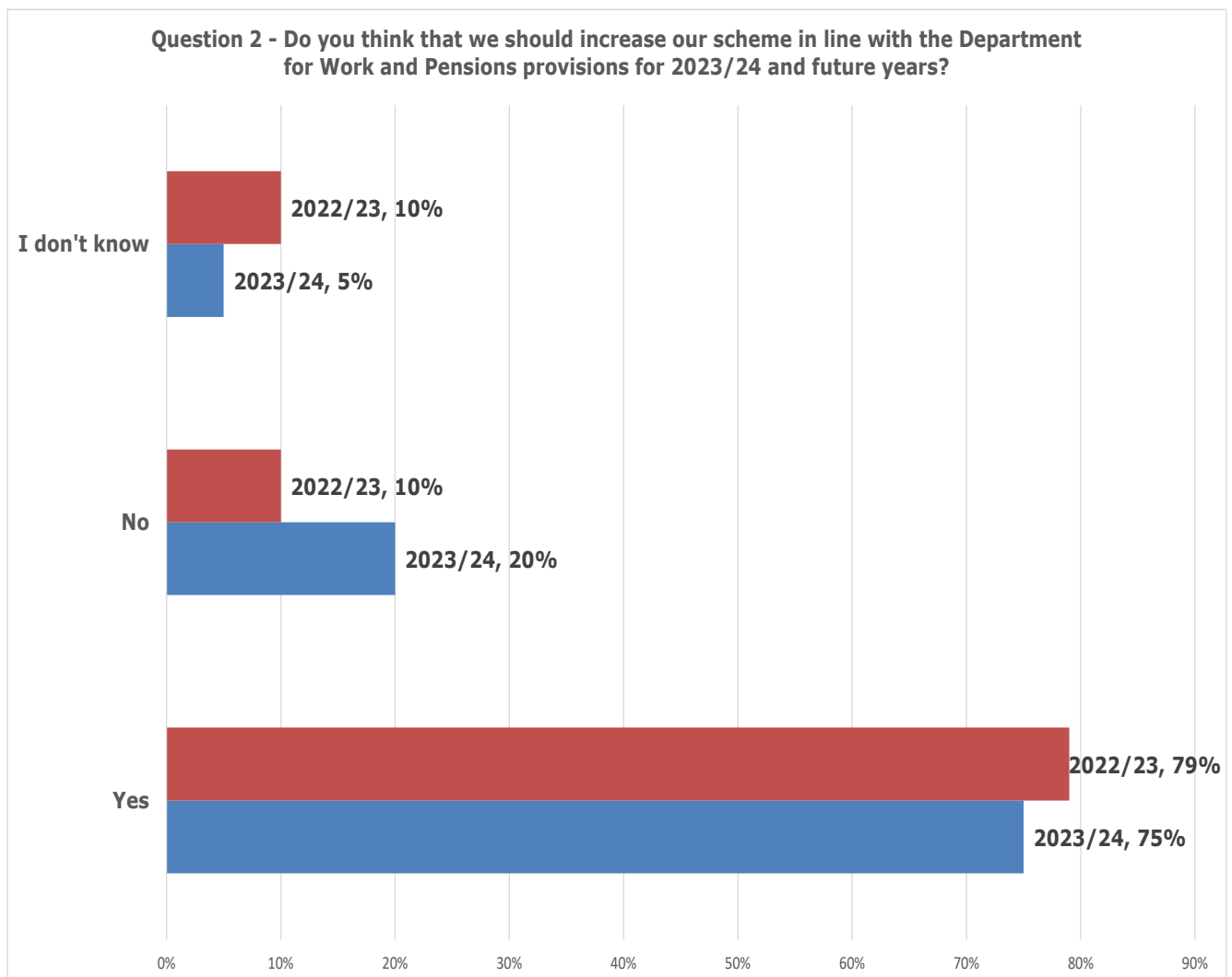
Results and Analysis

- All respondents were asked if they thought that the Council should retain its current scheme for the next financial year, to retain continuity. The comparison chart below shows that 68% (56) of all respondents thought that the Council should retain its current scheme; a slight increase of 2% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. 22% (18) of all respondents thought the Council 'should not' retain its current scheme for the next financial year, with the remaining 11% (9) stating that 'they did not know'.



9. All respondents were advised that each year the Government reviews and generally increases the amount people need to live on for the calculation of welfare benefit and that by applying the same changes to Boston Borough Council's Council Tax Support scheme it would ensure that the scheme remains up to date with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) allowances and premiums each year. They were then asked if they thought the Council should increase its scheme in line with the Department for Work and Pensions provisions for 2023/24 and future years.

The comparison chart below shows that three quarters (75%) (63) of all respondents thought that the Council should increase its scheme in line with the Department for Work and Pensions provisions for 2023/24 and future years; a slight decrease of 4% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. The chart also shows that 20% (17) of all respondents thought the Council 'should not' increase its scheme in line with the Department of Works and Pensions provisions for 2023/24 and future years; an increase of 10% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. The remaining 5% (4) of all respondents stated that they 'did not know'.



Responses from precepting authorities

10. A response was received from the Office of the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner confirming that they noted Boston Borough Council's proposals for its Council Tax Support Scheme in 2023/24.
11. No response was received from Lincolnshire County Council.

Contact:

For more information relating to this report contact:

- Jackie Todd, Consultation Officer at policy&performance@e-lindsey.gov.uk
or 01507 601111



Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2023/24

We are asking for your views on our proposed Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) for 2023/24

The Council Tax Support scheme is a way of helping people on low or no income pay their Council Tax bill.

Each year the Council must decide whether to change the scheme for working age applicants in the area.

Pensioners are not affected by changes made to the local scheme as the rules for applicants of pension age continues to be set by Central Government. Pensioners can continue to get up to 100% discount on their Council Tax.

Boston's scheme for working age applicants has been based broadly on the following principles:-

It protects people over pension age (as prescribed by Government), and all War Disablement Pensioners, War Widows and War Widowers.

It is means-tested and allows for vulnerability within the calculation, including people with children, disabilities or caring responsibilities.

The maximum support available to working age applicants is 75%, meaning that all working age households have to pay at least 25% towards their Council Tax.

The overall cost of the scheme currently is around £3.6million, and we pay Council Tax Support to around 2,170 working age households.

We are proposing to keep the Council Tax Support scheme the same for 2023/24 as it is in 2022/23, and are seeking views on whether we should up-rate our scheme for working age claimants in line with the Department for Work and Pensions provisions for Housing Benefit. This will apply to all Council Tax Support claimants and will keep the local Council Tax Support scheme aligned with national welfare provisions.

Retaining the main characteristics of our current Council Tax Support scheme means there will be no major changes to the support a customer would receive.

We would welcome your views as part of this consultation.

Closing date for submission of responses is Friday 30th September 2022

Please read each question and give your response by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

Do you think that the Council should retain its current scheme for the next financial year, to provide continuity?

| |
|------------------|
| --Click Here-- ▼ |
| Yes |
| No |
| I don't know |

Each year the Government reviews and generally increases the amount people need to live on for the calculation of welfare benefit. By applying the same changes to our Council Tax Support scheme we would ensure that our scheme remains up to date with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) allowances and premiums each year.

Do you think we should increase our scheme in line with the Department for Work and Pensions provisions for 2023/24 and future years?

| |
|------------------|
| --Click Here-- ▼ |
| Yes |
| No |
| I don't know |

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey
Please press submit now