

Appendix A

Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 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 2024/25 consultation which took place between 21st September 2023 to 17th November 2023.
2. The exercise was performed to gain the views of residents on the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for the 2024/25 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 2024/25. 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 21st September 2023, inviting them to give their views on the proposals for 2024/25.
 - 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%).

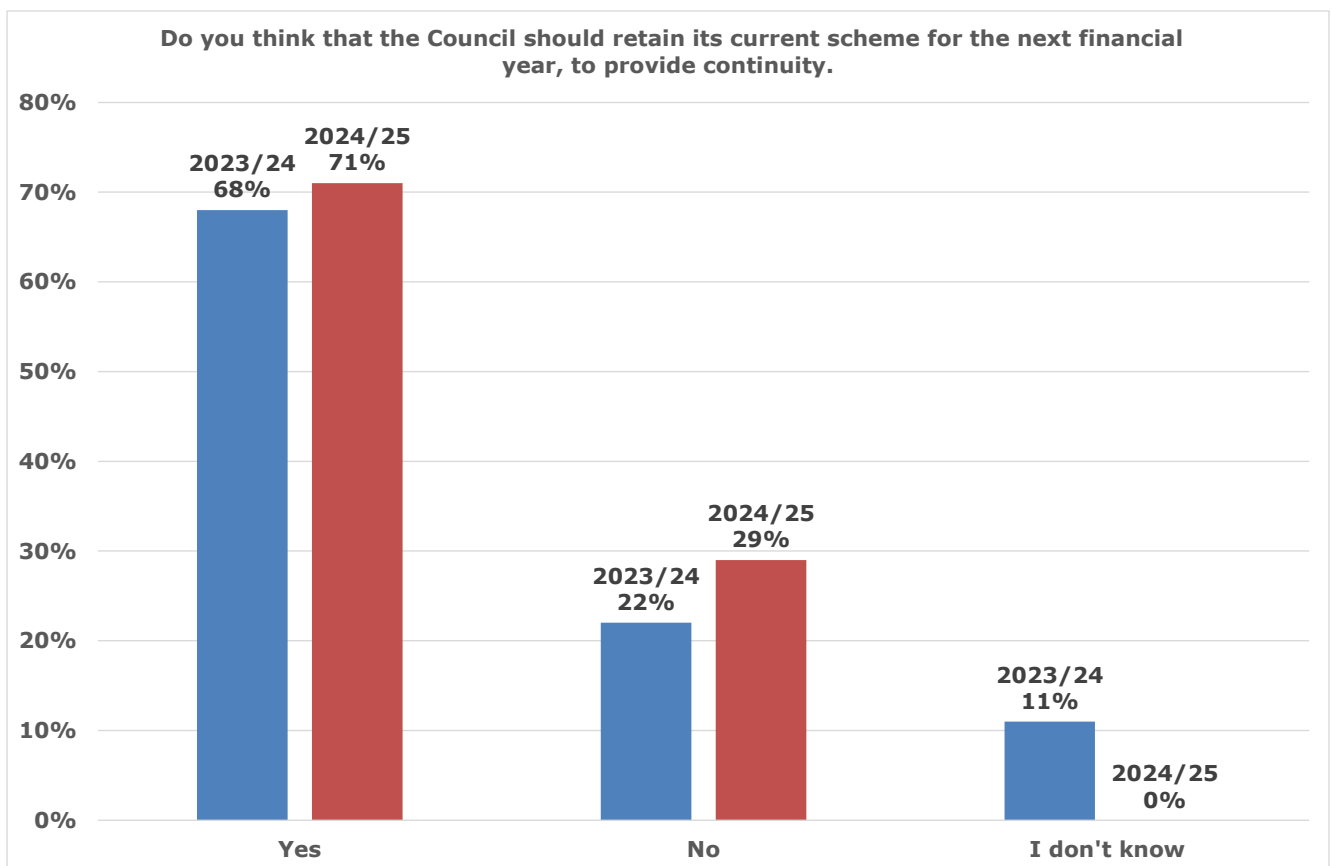
Response Rate

5. 35 electronic responses were received; a significant decline of 52 responses when compared with the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23.

6. 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.

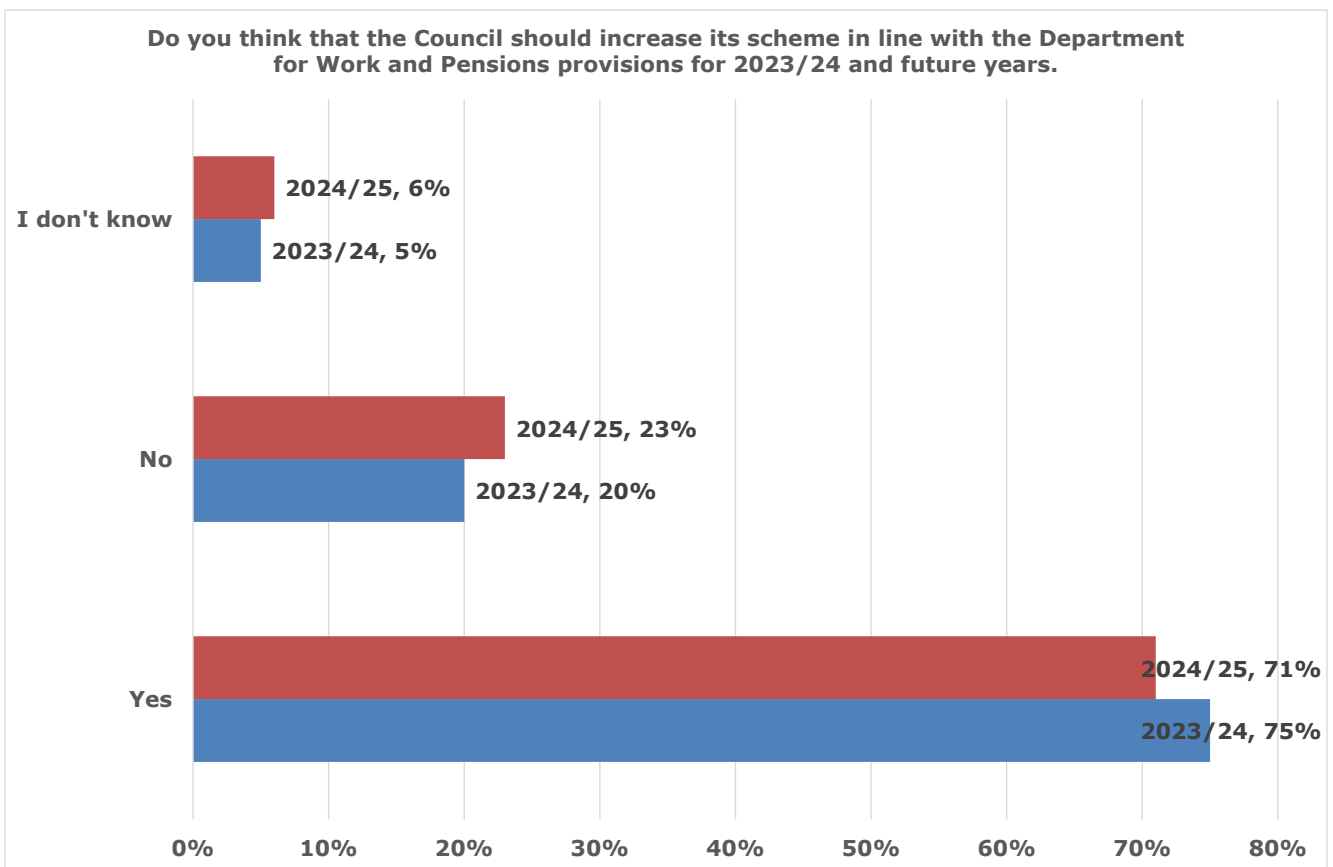
Results and Analysis

7. 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 71% of all respondents thought that the Council should retain its current scheme; a slight increase of 3% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. The remaining 29% of all respondents thought the Council 'should not' retain its current scheme for the next financial year; an increase of 7% when compared with the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. No respondents stated that they 'did not know' if the Council should retain its current scheme for the next financial year, compared with 11% in 2022/23.



8. 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 2024/25 and future years.

The comparison chart below shows that 71% of all respondents thought that the Council should increase its scheme in line with the Department for Work and Pensions provisions for 2024/25 and future years; a slight decrease of 4% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. The chart also shows that 23% of all respondents thought the Council 'should not' increase its scheme in line with the Department of Works and Pensions provisions for 2024/25 and future years; a slight increase of 3% when compared to the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23. The remaining 6% of all respondents stated that they 'did not know', a slight increase of 1% when compared with the previous consultation exercise undertaken in 2022/23.



Responses from precepting authorities

9. 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 2024/25.
10. A response was also received from Lincolnshire County Council stating that as a major preceptor, any changes to the scheme proposed by the district could have a significant impact on the Council Tax income received by Lincolnshire County Council. The County Council is supportive of Boston Borough Council’s proposal, which is to retain the current local scheme, up rated in line with changes applied by DWP.

Contact:

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