Council Tax
Support Scheme
Leicester City Council's Council Tax Support Scheme

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1. Introduction

This document sets out a brief summary of the Council’s Council Tax Support Scheme. This largely follows the government’s scheme but there are some changes for working age households.

The Government has prescribed a national scheme for pensioner households, which fully protects pensioners from the impact of transfer from Council Tax Benefit to Council Tax Support. The prescribed scheme for pensioners is included in the Council’s Scheme.

2. The scheme: Law and legal context

The scheme explained here is the Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for Leicester City Council, in its capacity as the Billing Authority for Leicester City.

The CTS scheme applies from April 2013.

3. Overall provisions: Universal Credit

Universal Credit started rolling out in Leicester in January 2016, and from 13 June 2018 Universal Credit Full Service was introduced. This is a new benefit paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) which is replacing income support, housing benefit, jobseekers allowance, employment & support allowance, child tax credits and working tax credits. Council Tax Benefit is no longer available but local authorities are able to provide Council Tax Support to local residents. The CTS Scheme may need to be changed in the future to take account of changes to Universal Credit and the benefits system.

4. The CTS Scheme: Maximum entitlement

The CTS Scheme is in the form of a means-tested discount based on the Government’s default scheme.

The CTS Scheme applies a maximum eligible amount of Council Tax. In other words, if your Council Tax bill is higher than the maximum eligible amount, the CTS awarded will be restricted to reduced liability used in the assessment of CTS, see below. (The restriction only applies to working age assessments). The maximum amount of Council Tax which may be awarded under the CTS will be limited in one or more of the following ways:

1. The maximum amount of Council Tax which is eligible for CTS and which may be the maximum award under the Council’s CTS scheme is restricted to the amount of Council Tax due for the year for dwellings within Band B of the Council Tax calculations;

2. The maximum amount of Council Tax which is eligible for CTS and which may be the maximum award under the Council’s CTR scheme is set at a percentage of the total Council Tax due as calculated at (1) above. This amount is set at 80%.
5. The CTS Scheme: other determinations

The CTS scheme additionally makes provisions in relation to the award of CTR in the following circumstances:

1. You will not be eligible for assistance under the Scheme if you have savings of £6,000 or over, or £16,000 if you are a pensioner.
2. Second adult rebate: there is no provision for a second adult rebate except in the case of pensioners.
3. An amount will be set each year for the minimum weekly award of CTR. This has been set at £3.70 and may change each year in line with government-set benefits deductions or the Consumer Price Index on 1st April of each consecutive year commencing 2013/14. This is determined by the lower rate third party deduction from a number of Social Security Benefits. This means that if the calculation of award shows that the award will be less than or equal to this amount no award of CTS under the Council’s scheme will be payable.

6. Vulnerable People

The CTS Scheme sets out provisions designed to ensure that the most vulnerable are given some relief. In addition the Council has a Council Tax Discretionary Relief hardship fund and individuals may apply to the Council for relief under the hardship fund. The operation of this fund is at the discretion of the Council.

7. Claims for Council Tax Support

If you were in receipt of Council Tax Benefit immediately before 1st April 2013 you will have been treated as having made an application for CTS under the current scheme.

You may apply for Council Tax Support in the following ways:

- In writing using the Council’s application form;
- Online via the Council’s website.

Any application made through these channels (detailed above) may be subject to additional validation, as required by the Council, to confirm entitlement and to calculate the amount of Council Tax Support due.

The Council shall not decide entitlement where a claim is incomplete until all relevant information is provided. This information must be provided within one month of any written request from the Council. This period may be extended if the Council considers this to be reasonable in the circumstances.

A claim for support may be amended or withdrawn, in writing, at any time prior to the council making a decision about entitlement.

8. Payment and overpayments

A council tax payer’s bill will be reduced by way of a credit for the amount of Council Tax Support granted depending on the circumstances. In the event of an overpayment of Council Tax Support, then the amount of such overpayment will be added to the bill.
9. Appeals

You may appeal against the council decision regarding your eligibility for, or entitlement to Support in the first instance by writing to the council to request that it looks at its decision again. The Council will reconsider and notify you of its considerations and reasons for its decision.

You can request a subsequent and independent review of our decision by the Valuation Tribunal for England.

10. General Uprating

The figures set out in the Council Tax Support scheme may be uprated, to take effect 1st April every year. The amount of uprating will be determined by the Council and will link as closely to other welfare benefit changes or may be linked to the consumer price index, of inflation set in the preceding September or by another rate determined with reference to provisions made for Universal Credit.

11. Appendices

a. Appendix A ~ Useful information
Appendix A

This section sets out some useful links to websites where you can find more detailed information about both the regulatory framework and the guidance issued to local authorities.

- The Department for Local Government and Communities: [http://www.communities.gov.uk/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/)
- Regulations laid under the appropriate provisions and governing the administration, design and implementation of CTR, including the proposed Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) regulations: [http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/draftprescribedreqsregs](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/draftprescribedreqsregs)

Other legislation in relation to Vulnerable Groups including but not limited to the Child Poverty Act 2010;