

### **What is Council Tax Support?**

Council Tax Support (CTS) is a local discount scheme that provides financial support to working-age households in Slough who are on low incomes or receiving benefits.

The Government sets the rules which tell us how much CTS can be paid to people of state pension age, and Slough is responsible for setting the scheme for working-age households.

There's more information about Slough's current CTS scheme on the council website: <https://www.slough.gov.uk/council-tax-support/council-tax-support-scheme>

### **What is the current Council Tax Support Scheme?**

Full details of Slough's CTS scheme for 2024/25 are available on the council website:

<https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/153/council-tax-support-scheme>

### **Who receives Council Tax Support?**

In October 2024, 6,504 working age households in Slough were in receipt of CTS, that's out of 56,000 households in the borough who are liable for Council Tax.

### **Why are you proposing changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme?**

Since 2013, the council has provided a CTS scheme that helps working-age households on a low income. Some households get help with up to 100% of their Council Tax costs.

The amount of money the council is spending on CTS is going up every year and the council predicts it will spend more than £12 million on CTS next year if we don't implement the changes. The council can't afford for this to keep going up in this way.

The changes are proposed so that CTS continues to support Slough's most vulnerable residents now and, in the future, but remains affordable for the council.

No decision has been made to make any of these changes – the results of this consultation will show us exactly how different people would be affected. We'll look very carefully at the results before making any decision.

### **Will any other council tax discounts or exemptions be affected by the proposed Council Tax Support changes?**

This consultation does not propose to make any changes to other council tax discounts or exemptions, such as single person discount.

These will still be applied to your council tax before you are assessed for CTS.

### **Will the proposed changes to Council Tax Support affect pensioners?**

No. The CTS scheme for people of state pension age is set by law and cannot be changed by the council.

There are sometimes different rules for couples where one is still below state pension credit age (66 years) so you may be treated as a working age couple even if one of you is of state pension credit age.

### **What are the changes proposed for the Council Tax Support Scheme?**

Under the proposals all working age households who currently receive CTS will see their support level decrease. The maximum level of support, which is currently 100% would reduce to 70%. All of the rates currently below 100% would also reduce. The table below contains the current and proposed bands:

Income Bands	Current	Proposed	Earnings threshold (weekly)
	Discount off CT liability	Discount off CT liability	
1	100.00%	70.00%	Not working
-	-	-	-
1	75.00%	50.00%	Earnings <£115.38
2	60.00%	40.00%	£115.39 - £184.61
3	40.00%	30.00%	£184.62 - £253.84
4	30.00%	20.00%	£253.85-£323.07
5	20.00%	10.00%	£323.08-£392.30
6	10.00%	5.00%	£392.31-£461.53
7	0.00%	0.00%	£461.54 and above

No decision has been made to make any of these changes – the results of this consultation will show us exactly how different people would be affected. We'll look very carefully at these results before making any decision.

### **Where can I see details of the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme?**

It is a legal requirement to publish the draft CTS scheme setting out the proposed changes. This can be found on the council website, search 'Slough Council Tax Support'.

### **What do I do if I'm worried about the proposed Council Tax Support changes?**

No decisions have been made on the proposed Council Tax Support scheme changes. We will look very carefully at the consultation results before making any decision.

However, we realise that the proposed changes may be worrying for you. As part of the proposed changes, we are looking at how we can help those households who would be most affected and want to hear of any other suggestions on what we could do to help.

We are also available for you to come and talk to us to understand more about the proposed changes and what it might mean to you. Come along to one of the consultation events to hear more.

### **What other savings are you looking at?**

The Council continues to find itself in a tough financial position and we must look at how we are going to pay for services next year.

As part of that review, we're looking at how we can make savings in all other services across the Council, including increasing Council Tax.

The other areas of potential savings will be explored later this year as we begin the process of setting our annual budget.

We're consulting on the CTS scheme now because of the timescales involved should changes to the scheme be approved and implemented from April 2025.

No decisions have been made yet on the CTS proposals. Councillors will look very carefully at the consultation results before making any decision. A decision may be taken to make no changes to the scheme.

### **How can I have my say?**

This consultation is open from 18 November until 29 December 2024. No decisions have been made to make any of these changes – the results of

this consultation will show us exactly how different people would be affected. We'll look very carefully at these results before making any decision.

To have your say during the consultation period you can:

- Fill in our online consultation using the link below:  
<https://slough.citizenspace.com/corporate/council-tax-support-scheme-2025-26>

Or by scanning this QR code:



If others you know, or are representing require assistance, they can:

- Pick up a paper survey from the Curve, or from Britwell, Chalvey, Cippenham, and Langley Community Hubs. Click on the link for more details <https://www.slough.gov.uk/directory/1/council-buildings/category/6>
- Email [cts.consultation@slough.gov.uk](mailto:cts.consultation@slough.gov.uk) if you are unable to pick up a form or require a different format.

### **Can I talk to someone about the proposals?**

There are lots of opportunities to learn more about these proposals and see how you might be affected Keep an eye out for dates, locations and times on the website.

### **How are you telling people about the consultation?**

The consultation activity will include:

- Mailshot to all households receiving Council Tax Support
- Event with Voluntary and Community Sector groups
- Public drop-in events
- Online survey
- Hardcopy questionnaire
- Publicity e.g. posters in libraries

- Media articles including council website
- Consider how to approach people where language may be a barrier
- General enquiry email box for consultation purpose  
[cts.consultation@slough.gov.uk](mailto:cts.consultation@slough.gov.uk)

### **What organisations are you talking to about these changes?**

We have met with some representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector in Slough to explain the consultation, what the proposed changes could mean, and to seek their advice on the best way to engage with people affected.

### **What will happen next?**

Once the consultation period has ended, the feedback will be collated and a public report presented at the council's January Cabinet meeting. If changes to the scheme are proposed, the new scheme would go to Council for approval. If changes to the scheme are approved, they would take effect from 1 April 2025.

### **What would be the impact of reducing the maximum Council Tax Support households could receive from 100 percent to 70 percent of their Council Tax bill?**

If implemented, this proposal would reduce the amount of Council Tax Support that households receive. The table below shows how Council Tax Support would be reduced if this proposal is implemented.

The table shows for each income band the proportion of the Council Tax bill covered currently and how much would be covered if this proposal is adopted next year.

Weekly net earned income is the net earnings from employment and/or self-employment used by DWP in the Universal Credit assessment. It will be the total net earned income for the claimant and partner if there is one.

		<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Income Bands</b>	<b>Earnings threshold</b>	<b>Discount off CT</b>	<b>Discount off CT</b>
	<b>(weekly)</b>	<b>liability</b>	<b>liability</b>
1	Not working	100.00%	70.00%
-	-	-	-
1	Earnings <£115.38	75.00%	50.00%
2	£115.39 - £184.61	60.00%	40.00%
3	£184.62 - £253.84	40.00%	30.00%
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