



# Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2026-27

Research report

November 2025

DRAFT



## Acknowledgements

Uttlesford District Council would like to thank all the participants who took part in the polling.

## Contents

Summary .....	4
Key messages .....	4
Background .....	4
Results summary .....	5
Introduction .....	6
Methodology .....	6
Data management .....	6
Survey of residents and preceptors' views on a proposed LCTS scheme for 2026-27 .....	8
Appendix A: Polling questions .....	11

## Summary

We know that it is a difficult time for everyone right now as the rising cost of everything is making it hard to make ends meet. Inflation and the cost of living are still going up, and, as things become more expensive, we know that some households will be struggling.

We want to help protect the most vulnerable people in our district. One of the ways that we do this is through the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme.

LCTS is a scheme to help people on a low income pay their Council Tax. The amount of support people in Uttlesford can get will depend on their income and their personal circumstances.

We are required to run a consultation on any proposed scheme for the next financial year. This survey asked for the views of key preceptors, interested bodies and residents on a proposed LCTS scheme for 2026-27.

## Key messages

The relatively small response sample size returned for this survey means that it is difficult to extrapolate any wider trends. Nonetheless, it does provide some valuable insights into the relative level of support for such a scheme across the district.

Most respondents support the proposed scheme. They cite the need to provide as much help as possible for those in need, though there is some confusion over the relative level of support that the council currently provides.

This year we received no responses from organisations. By contrast, more members of the public responded to the survey than in previous years.

## Background

Uttlesford District Council has been consulting local residents on the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Uttlesford since 2012 during which time the scheme has undergone various changes.

For the financial year 2026-27 the council is proposing that the scheme is set on the same basis as that for 2025-26, namely to:

- freeze the contribution rate so that the amount that LCTS claimants pay towards their Council Tax bill will be kept at 12.5%. This remains the lowest contribution rate in Essex
- continue to protect pensioners, the vulnerable and disabled residents and their carers on a low income

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will influence schemes in future years with ongoing LCTS provision being developed by partners in the new authority which will replace Uttlesford District Council.

## Results summary

Summary results of the Uttlesford LCTS scheme 2026-27 survey.

- Some 55 people responded to the survey this year. This represents a 62 per cent increase on the response rate from 2024.
- No organisations responded this year.
- When asked about the 2026/27 scheme, 69 per cent fully support the proposals and a further 20 per cent partly approve of them.
- Just over half of those who completed the survey left a comment. In general, these re-iterated support for the proposed scheme. There is, though, some evident confusion over how LCTS works. Other comments proposed only making the scheme available to particular groups.

## Introduction

This report outlines the results of a public survey on the proposed LCTS scheme for 2026-27. The survey ran for 6 weeks in October and November and was widely promoted on the council's website, in the local press, by email and through newsletters.

The results will be used by officers and councilors to help inform their decision when agreeing to a final LCTS scheme for 2026-27.

## Methodology

The survey ran from Friday 10 October to Friday 21 November 2025.

At the start of the consultation emails inviting participation in the survey were sent directly to:

- Essex County Council
- The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
- all town and parish councils in the district
- district council members

The survey was widely publicised. A press release was distributed to all local media and newspapers on 20 October. It was included in *Members' Bulletin* and *District News* e-newsletters reaching some 6,769 people. It was also prominently promoted via the council's website homepage throughout the consultation period.

Those people who do not use digital services were offered the option of asking for a paper copy of the survey and proposals to be sent to them by post (details were provided on the website, in the press releases and in publicity).

Respondents were asked to consider the proposals and to feedback on whether they supported or opposed them. They were additionally invited to leave comments and to indicate if they were responding as an individual, or on behalf of an organization.

This survey was available online through the council's website. Paper surveys were also provided should anyone wish to reply by post. A total of 55 online surveys were completed. No postal surveys were requested or returned.

## Data management

Note that:

- In the report percentages in tables may add up to more than 100 due to rounding

# Survey of residents and preceptors' views on a proposed LCTS scheme for 2026-27

This section outlines the survey results for 2025 (for the proposed 2026-27 scheme) and compares those with response rates from 2024 (for the 2025-26 scheme). Not all 55 respondents answered all the questions.

The response rate this year represents a 62 per cent increase on the number of responses received in 2024.

All responses were from private individuals. No key preceptors responded, nor did any organisations. See figure 1. A full set of the questions asked is available in Appendix A.

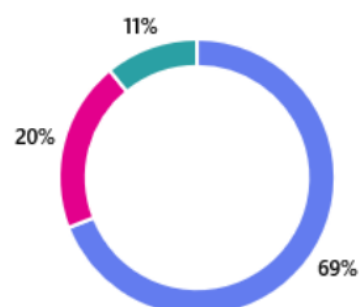
Overall submissions	Result counts 2025 (percentage)	Result counts 2024 (percentage)
Total number of paper forms returned	0 (0% of total responses)	0 (0% of total responses)
Total number of web forms / direct emails submitted	<b>55</b> (100% of total responses)	<b>34</b> (100% of total responses)
<b>Breakdown</b>		
Total number of comments received from citizens	55	31
Total number of comments received from preceptors or organisations	0	3

**Figure 1: All responses**  
Base (all respondents): Uttlesford 55

## Support for the proposed scheme

Eighty-nine per cent of respondents either fully or partly support the proposed scheme. Just eleven per cent do not support the scheme. No 'other' comments were received regarding this question. See figure 2.

- Fully support the proposed scheme
- Partly support the proposed scheme
- Do not support the proposed scheme



	Per cent
	<b>Uttlesford</b>
Fully support the proposed scheme	69
Partly support the proposed scheme	20
Do not support the proposed scheme	11
Other	0

**Figure 2: Support for the proposed scheme**

Base (all respondents): Uttlesford 55

## Comments on the proposed scheme

Just over half of respondents (30 people) provided additional comments to clarify their views. Many comments re-iterated support for the most vulnerable people in the district. It is clear, though, that there is a degree of confusion with the way that the LCTS scheme operates with a number of people proposing 'higher rates of contribution' probably in the mistaken belief that these would underpin a more generous scheme. A minority of comments propose that ethnicity or origin should be deciding factors in allocating help. See figures 3-5.

12 respondents (40%) answered supporting for this question.



## Comments: people who fully support the proposed scheme

I fully approve. Uttlesford is a rich area. We should be supporting those who are less fortunate.

Yes help them

I approve

it is very important that we look after the vulnerable

Why cant we be the best in Essex we are affluent area.

Dont let reform take away tax support !

We as human beings need to support the vulnerable. it is important that we do. I would pay more tax.

It supports some of the most vulnerable people in the District

I would like to see more help - and be the best in Essex - in real terms this helps only a little x

Yes I support this help

We must support those , who need,

I believe - hope, anyway - that UDC is in a better position than I am to assess needs and resources. The current scheme does not adversely affect me, but if it helps others in need, I am content for it to continue.

So important to keep supporting people who need help. The more so now when we have the evil influence of Reform growing! We should show care and compassion not hate.

Good

I support the proposed scheme.

**Figure 3: Comments on the proposed scheme: fully support**

Base (all respondents): Uttlesford 15



### Comments: people who partly support the proposed scheme

I believe the scheme is fantastic for those who really need the help, but feel too many people cheat the system and take advantage.

Yes but it should be giving more help to people. Give more than 12 per cent to people im sure other councils that are not so rich give more to people who live in those areas

Council Tax Support schemes provide help for people on low incomes with their Council Tax bill. - should be more help

In general, the lower your income the more the bill can be reduced by Local Council Tax Support. From 1st April 2015 everyone of working age will have to pay at least 20% of their bill.- which indicates up to 80% off - - we should follow this example .

I suggest swapping the 12% rate for a 0% rate

I don't understand how the current scheme works nor how eligibility is defined

Only support British people not immigrants who have got a free house and bring all their family .

I think we should reduce all of their council tax.

Uttlesford you can do better. 12 per cent is not very much for people impacted by the cost in living crises why not 25 or 50 per cent help?

We agree to help those in need but this all sounds too complicated make it easy to understand or no one will use it too many benefits are too complicated for people to claim them I know this because iv tried myself and had to give up make it way!

**Figure 4: Comments on the proposed scheme: partly support**

Base (all respondents): Uttlesford 10

### Comments: people who do not support the proposed scheme

I feel that the scheme should be brought into line with other councils and at least be 20% . Everyone is affected by increased costs. Over the last 6 years the council tax has increased dramatically and these costs need to be shared by all residents. People on benefits are not the only ones finding things difficult. Equally means exactly that.

there is no reason why Uttlesford is out of line with other Essex Districts in setting the contribution for claimants at 12.5%. When most other Districts set at 25%, UDC should be at least that. With all costs rising significantly, this magnifies the increase on other Council Tax payers. As UDC has such a large proportion of its area of a rural type - where services are less available - the more rural dwellers are already paying more for the services they do receive than the more urban dwellers, which may include more of the claimants (due to house prices etc). This becomes in effect a local income tax, which is surely beyond the remit of a DC and of CT, and is not reasonable.

dont give the scroungers any free money. some of us haveto work all our lives and dont get anything for it. if youve worked for it you deserve it

Everyone should pay for what they get. There are benefits available already for people who need them and from those benefits they should pay for things. The real

People you should be helping are those who work hard but don't qualify for benefits otherwise you are not rewarding people who really struggle

More support is needed for single households

**Figure 5: Comments on the proposed scheme: do not support**

Base (all respondents): Uttlesford 5

### Responding as an organisation

No organisations responded to this year's consultation.



## Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2026/27

We're asking you for your views on how much support we should give to people who might struggle to pay their Council Tax bill.

We won't share your views with anyone else; we'll only use them to help us to decide on the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme for 2026/27.

### How we handle your information

Information you provide will be treated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679. Your contact details will be used solely for the purpose of contacting you about your feedback. You should refer to our Corporate consultation privacy notice on [www.uttlesford.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/privacy) for an explanation of what we do with your personal information, how long we keep it and your right to withdraw your consent at any time you choose.

## Support for the scheme

Do you \*

- ☐ Fully support the proposed scheme
- ☐ Partly support the proposed scheme
- ☐ Do not support the proposed scheme
- ☐ Other

## Your comments

Would you like to make any comments on the proposed scheme? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Your comments on the proposals for the 2026/27 scheme \*

## Organisation

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Organisation name \*

## Keeping you informed

Would you like to be kept up to date with how the 2026/27 LCTS scheme is decided?

You can give us your contact details if you'd like to be kept informed about the proposed LCTS scheme.

☐ Yes

☐ No

## Contact details

If you would like to be kept up to date with how the 2026/27 LCTS scheme is decided, you can give us your contact details.

Name

Email

We'll only use this to send you information about how the 2026/27 LCTS scheme is decided

## Now send your survey

By submitting this consultation form you are confirming that, to the best of your knowledge, the details you are providing are correct.

---

If you require this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact our consultation team at Uttlesford District Council on 01•7V••1V99 or email: [consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk)



**Uttlesford District Council**

London Road Saffron Walden CB11 4ER

Telephone 01799 510510

Email [consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk)

[www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk)

© Uttlesford District Council

Date of publication November 2025