

Summary of Public Consultation

1. Consultation took place between 17th December 2012 to 14th January 2013. The consultation took the form of a consultation document and survey (in English & Welsh). It was available on the Councils website. It was also distributed to AMs, MPs, Members and Town & Community Councils. Posters were printed and distributed. There was some face to face meeting with some disability groups and other forums. All 13000+ current Council Tax Benefit customers were written to and informed of the consultation and proposed changes.
2. FCC received telephone 300+ calls from the public following the start of the consultation period and the despatch of the letters.
3. 20 residents asked for the documentation in hard format.
4. FCC received 18 survey documents regarding the consultation survey. 16 “online” and 2 in paper format. Only one was from an organisation and the others from individuals. All were in the medium of English.
5. A number of individual “letters” have been received and concerns are being addressed,
6. A number of general comments were made;

“Benefits exist as people can’t afford a decent standard of living. A reduction is a disgrace and shows how uncaring the government is. Tax the bankers”

“According to the paper can’t touch OAPs. Awful that the poorest are targeted so they have nothing to live on”

“Councils in England and Wales are protecting OAPs, Scotland no change”

“This is fair in the circumstances”

“Low income families depend on Benefits – higher fuel bills – many in Deeside are struggling”

“Unfair on pensioners who have limited income – sounds like you are blaming the UK government for a decision to limit to 90%”

“States 10% this year but what happens next year 20% then 30%.”

“It is intended that the poor in our society is to be squeezed”

“Benefit claimants are on a limited income, budget 10% will impact – people are in fuel poverty...”

“I am diabetic and disabled and need a special diet – 10% will have gone on fuel and food, I will have to go in to hospital and that will cost more”

“I am a single parent with a 2year old with cerebral palsy – I receive DLA highest rate for him so I can’t work”

“As Benefit is already means tested where does the extra income come from?”

“If payments are made to individuals and not landlords – what will be the safety net?”

“HELP! I am struggling to put food on the table and heat my home. Disabled and getting DLA. Every penny counts”

“I think this is crazy – people are already struggling – more depression for low income families”

“Where I am supposed to find the 10% - can I claim this back on my pension credit?”

7. Not many comments were made on the areas of discretion. The Royal British Legion commented that the status quo should be kept for the treatment of War Widows, Disablement Pensions and payments. There was one comment about designated offices that this should be considered. There were 3 comments about extended payments and consideration should be given to 6 weeks, 8 weeks and 6 months respectively. Backdated claims should be 6 months for all.