

Leicester
City Council

**MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

DATE: MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2015

TIME: 4:00 pm

**PLACE: Meeting Room 1 (G.01) - Ground Floor, City Hall, 115
Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Committee

Councillor Singh (Chair)

Councillor Bhatti (Vice Chair)

Councillors Dr Chowdhury, Corrall, Desai, Gugnani and Waddington

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

Elaine Baker

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

Elaine Baker, Democratic Support Officer

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Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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Further information

if you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact:

Elaine Baker, Democratic Support Officer on 0116 454 6355

or email Elaine.Baker@leicester.gov.uk, or call in at City Hall.

For Press Enquiries - please phone the **Communications Unit on 0116 454 4151**

PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING [Appendix A](#)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Committee held on 13 October 2015 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

**4. LIBRARIES PRINTED MUSIC AND DRAMA SERVICE: [Appendix B](#)
UPDATE REPORT**

The Director of Culture and Neighbourhood Services submits a report updating the Commission on the future operation of the Libraries' Printed Music and Drama Service. The Commission is recommended to note the actions taken since June 2014, in the light of the findings of the consultation, and the market research exercise that is to be carried out in February 2015 to examine and test a potential model for a regional service.

**5. NEW HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE [Appendix C](#)
UPDATE REPORT**

The Director of Local Services and Enforcement submits a report providing an update regarding the construction and completion of the new Household Waste Recycling Centre to be located on Gypsum Close, Leicester. The Commission is recommended to note the current progress with the construction of the Centre and the associated communications campaign.

6. WELFARE REFORM UPDATE [Appendix D](#)

The Director of Finance submits a report providing an update on welfare reform initiatives impacting locally, current benefits performance statistics and future developments. The Commission is recommended to note the report and comment on the observations contained in it.

**7. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION (LOCAL) SCHEME A [Appendix E](#)
YEAR ON (INCLUDING EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT REVIEW)**

The Director of Finance submits a report summarising the impacts of the Local

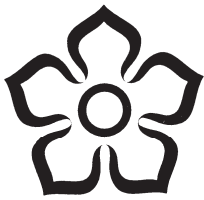
Council Tax Reduction scheme after one year in operation, reviewing its Equality Impact Assessment, evaluating the impact upon protected groups and the support in place to mitigate the impact and its effectiveness whilst balancing the council's obligation to collect the charge. The Commission is recommended to note and comment on the recommendations set out in the report.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Appendix F

The current work programme for the Commission is attached. The Commission is asked to consider this and make comments and/or amendments as it considers necessary.

9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Appendix A

Minutes of the Meeting of the
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY
COMMISSION

Held: MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2014 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Singh (Chair)
Councillor Bhatti (Vice Chair)

Councillor Dr Chowdhury	Councillor Gugrani
Councillor Corrall	Councillor Waddington
Councillor Desai	

In Attendance

Councillor Chaplin –	Member for Stoneygate Ward
Councillor Russell –	Assistant City Mayor (Neighbourhood Services)
Councillor Sood –	Assistant City Mayor (Community Involvement, Partnerships and Equalities)

* * * * *

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

28. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held on 8 September 2014 be approved as a correct record, subject to resolution 4) of minute 22, "Transforming Neighbourhood Services Programme – West Area", being amended as follows (new wording shown in italics):-

“That the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) be asked to advise the Executive of the Commission’s comments, recorded above, on Phase 2 of the Transforming Neighbourhood Services programme, stressing that the Commission ~~wants local community activities to continue at the centres under consideration~~ *recommends that a condition of the transfer of community centres to other operators should be that communities local to those facilities should be encouraged to use those facilities and that this usage should be increased where possible*”

29. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

30. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received.

31. CITY-WIDE STREET DRINKING ORDER

The Commission welcomed John Leach, the newly appointed Director of Local Services and Enforcement, to his first meeting.

The Director of Local Services and Enforcement submitted a report providing details of the work undertaken to establish a city-wide street drinking order. In introducing this report, the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) reminded Members that the consultation on the introduction of this order had still been underway when the agenda had been despatched. The findings of the consultation therefore had been circulated separately.

It was noted that a final decision on whether this order should be introduced would be taken at the Council meeting to be held on 13 November 2014.

The Assistant Mayor explained that a number of Designated Public Places Orders (DPPOs), banning drinking in the street in small areas of the city, previously had been introduced. It was expensive to operate these and street drinkers merely moved to just outside the area(s) covered. The possibility of introducing a city-wide order therefore was being considered.

Considerable research had been undertaken to find precedents for this from other areas and to identify potential problems with this approach. This had enabled a robust proposal to be prepared. Initial government advice had been that a city-wide DPPO could be introduced, as this would be valid for three years and then would be replaced by a PSPO, so consultation on the proposal had been started on this basis. Subsequently, this advice changed, due to the announcement of new legislation, to say that a DPPO could not be used. The consultation period therefore was re-opened for a further four weeks, as the original consultations were considered to be still valid for the new legal framework proposals.

Under the new legislation, DPPOs were to be replaced with Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs). PSPOs did not prevent people from drinking in the street, but gave the Police additional powers within a designated area to tackle street drinking where there was associated anti-social behaviour.

PSPOs were not a solution to problems associated with street drinking, but provided a tool the Police could use, when resources were available, in conjunction with other powers, (such as those for dealing with abusive behaviour or stopping people urinating in the street). Other agencies also had relevant powers, such as the Council's City Wardens, who could issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering.

The Commission noted that Leicestershire Police currently was being restructured. It was hoped that this would result in more Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) patrolling the streets, but the Council could not influence their deployment beyond making requests as a partner organisation.

The Assistant Mayor then made the following comments in response to questions and comments from the Commission:-

- The Council could not compel Police Officers to take specific actions or go to specific locations. However, requests for action would continue to be made at all levels. In addition, the number of Police Officers needed to be reduced, as financial savings had to be made, so it could not be guaranteed that the powers would be fully used;
- In order for the Police to make issues around street drinking a local priority, people needed to report problems to the Police, but it was recognised that people often preferred not to get involved in possible incidents. The Director of Local Services and Enforcement confirmed that the Police had advised that this could be embedded in local action plans as the force moved towards increased local policing. The Council also would maintain records, such as littering associated with street drinking;
- PCSOs had a new power enabling them to seize alcohol, but they still could not arrest people;
- The details of the proposed order had been fully discussed with the Safer Leicester Partnership, which was supportive of the proposals. The Council's Head of Community Safety was working with the Partnership to ensure that appropriate training was in place;
- It was recognised that some people felt that a city-wide order was not necessary, as one of the main problems was the availability of cheap alcohol, particularly high strength alcohol. Work being undertaken with retailers to encourage them not to sell high strength, low price alcohol was proving successful;
- Concern that some retailers were setting up unofficial seating areas for the consumption of alcohol, (for example, by setting crates outside shops),

were recognised. However, alcohol bought at an off-licence had to be consumed a certain distance away from where it was bought and retailers who did not discourage people from drinking it within that distance could have their licences reviewed. A separate briefing on this could be provided if required;

- A lot of time had been spent working with the Safer Leicester Partnership to identify possible unintended consequences of the proposed order. This included issues such as:-
 - The criminalisation of young people – work had been undertaken with Youth Workers to ensure that correct information was available and had been distributed;
 - The monitoring system – work with the Police was ongoing to identify where the order was implemented and to ensure that it was used in a fair and proportionate way; and
 - People not understanding the difference between not being able to drink at all and being able to drink if it did not cause disorder;
- Payment of any fine imposed would be made in the same ways as for any other financial penalty;
- A small number of individuals in the city had no home. However, a lot of street drinking was done by those with homes, but who chose to act anti-socially;
- All Councillors had a role in alerting the Police with concerns about particular areas. Front-line staff also potentially had a role in alerting the Police about anti-social drinking;
- The Council had used the experience of other authorities across the country to identify good practice. This included looking at the reasons why such orders were introduced, how they were consulted on and implemented, and what unintended consequences were identified; and
- It was hoped that the Police would be able to respond to public concerns and focus resources where problems were identified. This would not necessarily mean that the approach would be the same across the city, as some areas could need more resources than others. This illustrated the importance of monitoring to ensure that the Police response was appropriate to each case.

The Head of Community Safety advised the Commission that:-

- When the Police used these powers, they would monitor the individuals in relation to whom they were used. For example, their age, ethnicity and location would be recorded;

- The Police were involved in a project with hospital Accident and Emergency services to record injuries and/or violence attributable to alcohol;
- City Wardens would collate data on littering due to street drinking; and
- The Council would collate information from all sources on a regular basis, so that outreach work by the Council and its partners could be targeted effectively. In this way it was hoped that behaviour could be changed.

Councillor Chaplin, a Member for Stoneygate Ward, addressed the Commission at the invitation of the Chair, making the following points:-

- Street drinking was entrenched in Stoneygate Ward, so the city-wide approach being considered was welcomed, as it removed any ambiguity about what was covered;
- An important issue was where street drinkers, particularly those with an alcohol addiction, could go for help and/or support if the PSPO was made. Safe places needed to be made available to meet this need, to ensure that street drinkers were not harmed;
- Police powers were very limited, so it could be interesting to invite the Police to a meeting of this Commission to explain how they could implement the PSPO;
- It was hoped that people would feel that it was worth reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour caused by street drinking;
- Street drinkers in the Stoneygate Ward had indicated that one reason for their drinking was that they could buy high strength alcohol very cheaply in the area. Cumulative Impact Zones (CIZs) had made a difference in some areas, but it was recognised that limiting sales in one area could displace the problem to another area. CIZs and the PSPO therefore needed to be considered together;
- The two parks in Stoneygate in which drinkers gathered were maintained via Evington Park. That park was some distance from Stoneygate, so maintenance could be improved by managing maintenance via Victoria Park; and
- It would be useful for staff new to the Parks service to receive training on street drinking issues as part of their induction.

Alan Fox, Chair of HART, (a local residents' association in south Highfields), addressed the Commission at the invitation of the Chair. He explained that over two years ago evidence had been compiled to enable DPPOs to be introduced in Onslow Park and Cedar Park. However, they had not been introduced, as the focus changed to introducing a city-wide order. South Highfields was on the edge of the CIZ and the DPPO area, so drinkers were

funnelled in to the parks in the south Highfields area. This was aggravated by the parks being in poor condition, due to a lack of maintenance by the Council. Consequently, as well as drinking, anti-social behaviour was occurring, such as urinating, shouting and incidents involving drugs.

As a result of this situation, local people felt abandoned. Mr Fox therefore questioned why it had taken so long to introduce a way of curtailing the problems being experienced and why the Council had not been able to proceed on the basis of the evidence previously obtained.

In reply, the Assistant Mayor explained that CIZs could be introduced under licensing legislation. Outside of a CIZ there was a presumption of approval for licenses for on- and off-sales of alcohol, but within a CIZ there was a presumption that licences would not be approved. CIZs could only be introduced when there was sufficient evidence of crime and disorder problems associated with the premises in the area. This could mean that the broader the CIZ area, the more thinly the evidence would be spread. The CIZ in the city relating to off-licenses therefore had been kept to a reasonable size, so that the evidence would be as robust as possible if challenged.

With regard to addiction issues, the Assistant Mayor confirmed that a number of programmes had been run over recent years, (with mixed success), to try to get support for people. It was recognised that addiction often was one issue in a chaotic life-style and programmes addressing this were resource-intensive. The Anchor Centre was not closing, as some people thought, but would be temporarily moving to an alternative location while works were done on the building. This was a “wet centre”, so provided facilities for safe drinking.

The Assistant Mayor further advised that the Commission that the Council participated in a large programme of work with Public Health services to address addiction. She further advised that she was happy to provide additional information on this work if the Commission wished.

In summary, the Commission noted that there was compelling evidence that street drinking contributed to anti-social behaviour. It also was recognised that it added to the public’s fear of disorder. However, any response to this needed to be balanced with the needs of drinkers and needed to be a multi-agency response.

The Commission thanked all involved for their work on this issue.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That this Commission supports the implementation of a city-wide street drinking order, provided such an order is balanced with the needs of habitual drinkers;
- 2) That the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) be asked to advise the Parks service of the concerns raised above about the maintenance of Onslow Park and Cedar Park;

- 3) That the Head of Community Safety be asked to provide regular monitoring reports on the implementation of the city-wide street drinking order; and
- 4) That the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) be asked to advise the Commission of any response from the Executive to the implementation of a city-wide street drinking order.

32. UPDATE ON WARD COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The Director for Culture and Neighbourhood Services and the Director for Delivery, Communications and Political Governance submitted a report providing an update following the transfer of the Ward Community Meetings function to the Community Services section in April 2014.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Mayor (Community Involvement, Partnerships and Equalities), thanked all officers who had dealt with community meetings and grant applications over the years and made the following comments:-

- Some different forms of engagement with communities had been introduced, such as patch walks;
- There had been 24 community meetings held since April 2014. The agendas for these varied, due to the different issues in different wards;
- Ward funds gave invaluable support to a number of groups across the city, with over £172,000 already having been allocated this year;
- One problem that had been identified was that payments of grants could be received after the event to which they related had taken place. Community Services therefore were looking at how grant payments could be made more quickly; and
- It was anticipated that a report would be made to this Commission in March 2015 about the future development of Community Meetings.

The Head of Community Services confirmed that different ways of working with Ward Councillors to improve meetings and grant funding were being investigated. This would be done in conjunction with consideration of the impact of the forthcoming changes to ward boundaries.

Members expressed the view that they had received high quality support from Democratic Services, when they had responsibility for these services. Some problems had been experienced when the transfer of responsibility had taken place, but some very good Community Services officers now were in post. However, some Community Meetings had not been so successful, as attendances were lower than previously.

The Commission expressed some concern at the suggestion that greater use of social media be made to publicise Community Meetings, as many Members and residents currently had little knowledge of social media. It therefore was suggested that the use of publicity leaflets should not be discontinued until other methods of communication were in place that had proved to be effective. The Head of Community Services gave an assurance that this course of action would be followed, but noted that there would be a cost associated with this.

Some wards had chosen to use some of their budget to have additional leaflets delivered to advertise Community Meetings and it was suggested that each Community Meeting could provide £500 from its funding to be used for additional publicity. Other Wards had used their funds to provide a newsletter for residents.

Members noted that insufficient advertising was a recurring problem in some areas, as was advertising being done in a different part of the Ward to where the meeting was being held. Also, no reference to individual Community Meetings had been seen on the Council's existing social media.

The importance of holding a meeting to discuss the agenda of each Community Meeting was stressed, as this could be used to identify appropriate local publications for advertising, such as newsletters, and areas of the Ward on which to focus publicity.

In addition, it was noted that posters were displayed in community facilities, such as community centres and SureStart centres, and people were encouraged to provide e-mail addresses by which to receive information on meetings.

It was suggested that Community Engagement Officers could distribute information in streets from which it was known no residents attended Community Meetings. There would be significant costs associated with this, so an alternative could be to find local volunteers to make these deliveries.

The Head of Community Services confirmed that work on improving communication was ongoing. The venues used also could be a significant factor in attendance levels, so Member involvement in discussions on how to attract people to meetings would be welcome. Members remarked that, if people were not attending meetings, it raised the question of whether the meetings were serving their purpose, so additional expenditure could be needed to attract people.

Issues relating to grant funding also were considered:-

- Some Wards had a larger number of organisations than others, so received a greater number of applications, but all Wards had the same level of funding;
- As changes to ward boundaries would come in to effect in May 2015, it was not possible to accurately predict how many applications would be received

by each Ward in the future;

- Some continuous funding could be provided, (for example, for events put on by groups covering more than one Ward), although there was a danger that some small organisations could become dependent on Ward funding to continue to operate;
- The importance of Ward community funding was recognised, but it was suggested that, if the cost of administering the grants was too high, consideration should be given to whether alternative means of delivering the funding should be introduced, or whether it should continue;
- It was questioned whether it was fair to give every Ward the same amount of funding, or whether some Wards should get more, to reflect specific economic conditions;
- The funding should be used for Ward development, not just to support groups, many of which received repeat funding; and
- A consistent way of considering grant applications across the whole city was needed. This was particularly important when an application was to more than one Ward, as currently some such applications were supported by one Ward but not the other(s).

In reply to a question, the Head of Community Services reminded Members that reports previously had been made to the Commission on the outcome of the pilot project on Community Meetings. Efforts had been made to take the lessons learned through the pilot project and apply them across the city and this was reflected in the report under consideration.

The Head of Community Services further noted that all Community Engagement Officers were now in post and they, along with Neighbourhood Development Managers, would continue to support Community Meetings. However, all Community Services staff would be included in a staffing review anticipated to take place in 2015.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted; and
- 2) That the Director for Culture and Neighbourhood Services and the Director for Delivery, Communications and Political Governance be asked to:-
 - a) Consider whether all Community Meetings could each contribute £500 towards additional publicity for those meetings;
 - b) Continue the work being done to find improved ways of administering Ward community funding grants;

- c) Note the assurance given to the Commission that, while alternative communication methods are considered, current methods will continue to be used; and
- d) Consider the points recorded above in any review undertaken of Ward Community Meetings.

33. DATA CENTRE MOVE

The Director for Information Services submitted a report describing the recent data centre move. This included a summary of the work involved, the planning behind the activity, issues faced after the move and lessons learned.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) drew attention to the significant work required to complete such a complicated move. She noted the scale of the challenges faced and congratulated the team on how well the move had been carried out. This showed the important role that support services had in the Council.

The Commission also extended its thanks to everyone involved in the move and its appreciation of the way in which it had been carried out.

In response to questions, the Director for Information Services reported that:-

- The majority of services had been back on-line within 24 hours of the move. The remaining services had been back on-line within a week of the move; and
- The costs of the project were included in the budget for the New Walk centre relocation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the details of the data centre move and the lessons learned be noted; and
- 2) That all involved in the data centre move be thanked for achieving a smooth transition with minimal problems.

34. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.29 pm

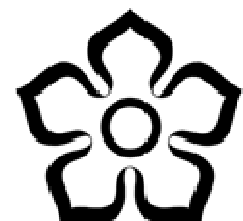
Report to Scrutiny Commission

Neighbourhood Services and Community
Involvement

Date of Commission meeting: 26th January 2015

Libraries Printed Music and Drama Service: Update Report

Report of the Director of Culture and Neighbourhood
Services



Leicester
City Council

Useful Information:

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Adrian Wills: Head of Neighbourhood Services
- Author contact details 39 3541 adrian.wills@leicester.gov.uk

1. Summary

This report updates the report to Scrutiny Commission of 30th June 2014.

Following the consultation undertaken with printed music and drama service subscribers, it became clear that a new option for the future of the music and drama service in Leicester and Leicestershire should be developed.

In close cooperation with Leicester City Council, the concept of a regional service offer is being investigated by Nottingham City Libraries with the support of Making Music and Locality. This service, if found to be viable, would provide a service to music groups in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Scrutiny Commission is advised that further consultation and market testing into the viability of a new business model for a regional service will be carried out with music groups in the cities and counties of Nottingham and Leicester.

If the business case for the service proves to be viable, then this could provide a suitable service for Leicester and Leicestershire. Market research will be carried out by Nottingham City Library Service to further explore the model and this is expected to take place during a 2 week period in February 2015.

2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny

- a) The Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note the actions taken since June 2014, in the light of the findings of the consultation.
- b) The Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note the market research exercise that is to be carried out in February 2015 to examine and test a potential model for a regional service.

3. Supporting Information

This report updates the report to Scrutiny Commission that was presented on 30th June 2014 concerning the future of the Libraries printed music and drama service. It summarises the results of the consultation that was carried out in April/ May 2014 into a proposal for the future delivery of the printed music and drama service. It describes the progress that has been made over the last few months in exploring options for a future service.

3.1 Key Points from the Consultation

As a reminder to the Scrutiny Commission, the key findings of the consultation on a proposal to offer a more limited service were as follows:-

- 51% of groups said that inter-library loans were important to them. This observation was supported by the Making Music organisation who represented the groups and provided information to the Scrutiny Commission meeting in June 2014
- 29.4% of groups suggested specific inter-library loan charges be introduced
- 41% said that the loss of advanced booking of scores would be a significant limitation to the service
- 25% said that they would pay more to ensure that these services were retained

Suggestions from the consultees included:-

- 55% suggested an increased annual subscription
- 11.8% suggested that the service be transferred to another organisation with the expertise and funding to run a full service
- 5.9% suggested that a larger scale service at national or regional level would be a better alternative

3.2 Feedback on Agreed Actions at the June Scrutiny Commission meeting

At the Scrutiny Commission meeting in June which discussed the findings from the consultation and heard representations from Making Music on behalf of groups using the service, the Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhoods agreed that further research into alternative ways to provide a sustainable service should be carried out. It was also agreed that the service be relocated from Southfields library to the Fosse Community Centre library. Both of these actions have been carried out.

It is clear that any new proposed service would benefit from providing requests and inter-library loans but the pressure that Leicester Libraries faces in terms of financial resources is becoming even greater, so services will have to be delivered differently.

Leicester Libraries have therefore been in contact with colleagues in Nottingham City Libraries, who also provide a printed music and drama service, to see if there is a new way of working that would deliver the type of service that groups in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland aspire to. It was agreed that options for a regional service based on Nottingham would be investigated.

3.3 Feasibility Study Into a New Regional Service

- Working in partnership with Making Music, who made representations to Scrutiny Commission in June, Nottingham City Libraries are developing a business case to become the provider of a regional printed music and drama service.
- Research is required to establish whether this concept is feasible, through engagement in both the Nottingham and Leicester areas among music groups. It is therefore intended to carry out research in February in Nottingham and Leicester/shire and Rutland to establish the feasibility a regional service.
- Music groups will be contacted to seek their views on options for a regional service. Nottingham City Libraries will lead on the development of a business

case for a new model of service.

- The intention would be to develop a sustainable new service by April 2015 that would support the activities of music groups in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- Any decisions on changes to the current service offer in Leicester arising from this work will be taken to the Leicester City Council's Executive and then to this Scrutiny Commission.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

'There are no significant financial implications arising from this report, which provides an update and signals consultation about a possible regional service.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081'

4.2 Legal implications

"Legal Services' Commercial, Contracts & Capital Team can provide advice to Culture and Neighbourhood Services on setting up a shared service to music groups, as this project develops.

Greg Surtees, Legal Services – 37 1421"

4.3. Climate Change implications

"If the development of a regional service across Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland were to lead to an increase in the number of inter-library loans then this would result in an increase in carbon emissions due to transportation of goods between libraries. This area should be clarified when presenting the results of further research.

Louise Buckley, Graduate Project Officer (Climate Change), 372 293."

4.4 Equality Impact Assessment

"As indicated above, local consultation findings have emphasised the importance of such a service in enabling local choirs and groups to continue to produce music and drama events that enable local residents to participate in community events of interest to them. The establishment of a regional resource is an option that if financially viable and appropriately accessible, would continue to ensure existing

need for such material is met. The outcome of the feasibility study and proposal for decision regarding the future of the service will determine more detailed equality implications for consideration. Given the range of subscribers to the service, those using and likely to use the service cover all protected characteristics.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext. 374147.”

4.5 Other Implications

None.

5. Background information and other papers:

None.

6. Summary of appendices:

None.

7. Is this a private report?

No.

Neighbourhood Services & Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission Report

New Household Waste Recycling Centre Update Report

Assistant Mayor Councillor Sarah Russell
Lead director: John Leach

26th January, 2015

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Rushymead, Hamilton & Humberstone and City wide
- Report author: Jonathan Feeley/Geoff Soden
- Author contact details: Link 376733 Mobile 07875 037093
- Report version number plus Code No from Report Tracking Database:

1. Purpose of report

To provide an update report regarding the construction and completion of the new Household Waste Recycling Centre to be located on Gypsum Close, Leicester.

2. Summary

This report provides an update on the construction and completion of the new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) located on Gypsum Close, Leicester. It covers in outline the progress with respect to this development since construction commenced in June 2014 and work towards the planned opening in spring 2015.

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission previously received a report relating to this matter on 4th July, 2013.

The facilities for the new site will include:-

1. Household waste delivered by residents as a replacement site for Bridge Road HWRC.
2. Trade/Commercial waste reception and sorting facilities to generate revenue and provide a registered recycling/disposal facility for the smaller businesses in the City, such as landscape gardeners, builders etc.
3. A reuse facility. To work with a local partner/charity to salvage reusable items and for them to either donate or sell them on at discounted costs to disadvantaged individuals.

The construction programme is scheduled to be completed on time in line with the opening in Spring 2015.

The budget for the facility is £3,533,500 and is funded from the Government's Weekly Support Fund. The project will come in within the overall budget.

The Trade Waste business will be operated in house with Leicester City Council staff handling the revenue and customer database and sourcing the most cost effective outlet for the material.

The reuse building will be rented out to a local charity following conclusion of a tendering exercise.

3. Recommendations

To note the current progress with respect to the construction of the new Household Waste Recycling Scheme to be located at Gypsum Close, Leicester and the associated communications campaign.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

The Council decided on 15th July 2013 to build a new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Leicester. The new facility, costing £3.5Million is being funded from the Government's Weekly Support Fund and will consist of reception facilities for both household domestic and trade/commercial waste in addition to the salvaging of useful household items for use by the voluntary sector.

The facilities for the new site will include:-

1. Household waste delivered by residents as a replacement site for Bridge Road HWRC.
2. Trade/Commercial waste reception and sorting facilities to generate revenue and provide a registered recycling/disposal facility for the smaller businesses in the City, such as landscape gardeners, builders etc.
3. A reuse facility. To work with a local partner/charity to salvage reusable items and for them to either donate or sell them on at discounted costs to disadvantaged individuals.

The new facility is being built on land on Gypsum Close which is owned by Leicester City Council and is the site of a former brick works/allotments.

Construction work is being undertaken by GF Tomlinson who commenced on site in June, 2014. All work is on schedule for completion in Spring 2015.

The reuse building will be rented out to a local charity following conclusion of a tendering exercise.

Leicester City Council will operate the Trade Waste Business and Weighbridge. This includes responsibility for the acceptance of revenue and payment of disposal at suitable local outlets. The Council will employ two weighbridge staff under the title of "Waste Management Officer" to be responsible for the daily operations of the business. There will also be an overseeing manager responsible for the business with their time divided between the business and the "Pass it On" furniture re-use scheme.

Biffa will also support the operation through the provision of three on-site staff to aid the trade customers with their recycling and waste in order to help minimise contamination and material going to landfill.

Local suppliers, sourced through a framework agreement, will be used for the transport, recycling and disposal of the materials.

The HWRC area, where the members of the public will dispose of their unwanted

items, will be operated by Biffa with the staff from the Bridge Road site relocated when it closes.

It is envisaged that the site will have a press launch in March 2015, with the opening date to be confirmed.

The following provides proposals for a communications campaign to further support this initiative:

Planned Communications	Timeline
Signage and literature at Bridge Road and Freeman's Common HWRCs, advertising the new site at Gypsum Close and informing users of the closure of the Bridge Road site.	January - March
Leaflet drop to households in the area surrounding Gypsum Close and Bridge Road HWRCs to promote the opening of the new HWRC and Reuse Shop and closure of Bridge Road.	Late February – Early March
New literature and updates to existing literature	January - March
Press Release	March
Advertising in local newspapers, publications and Council tax bills.	February - March
Editorial information in LINK	February
New pages and updates on the Council Website and via social media	January - March
Develop in conjunction with new Reuse partner set of external signage for the Reuse Shop and promotional literature.	February - March
<i>Public Communications</i>	
<p>Business communications plan:</p> <p>This plan will run concurrent to the public communications plan to promote the services of the new HWRC to local Small and Medium Enterprises and potential trade customers.</p> <p>Communications to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information in Council tax bills • Local business/trade publications • Links to local business forums/groups <p>Working with other internal LCC departments to encourage them to use the new Council facilities at Gypsum Close.</p>	January - Ongoing
<i>Business Communications</i>	

<p>New information and directional signage at Gypsum Close HWRC.</p> <p>New promotional space installed at Gypsum Close HWRC to allow for the display of LCC promotional information.</p> <p>Road signage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of new directional signs for Gypsum Close HWRC. • Removal of directional signage from Bridge Road HWRC. • Updating of directional signage to Freemen's Common 	<p>January - March</p>
<p>The proposed communications utilise a variety of media to target LCC's audiences to best maximise their impact and provide value for money. It is felt by joining communications for all elements of the new HWRC; public recycling and waste facilities; the trade waste facility and Reuse Shop, the Council will maximise impact and engagement with residents.</p>	

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There will be no direct capital finance implications for the City Council as the new HWRC site and the redevelopment of the Bridge Rd site have been designed and constructed within the available £3.533m grant for the Government's Weekly Collection Support Fund received from DEFRA.

The HWRC operational costs will be covered by the PFI unitary charge that is paid to Biffa for operating Bridge Rd HWRC which is to close, resulting with the relocation of the Biffa staff to Gypsum Close.

The Trade Waste business will be financed from the revenue generated through receipts from customers.

The reuse building will be a source of revenue to LCC through the rental of the premises to a suitable local charity appointed through a tendering process.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance 374081

5.2 Legal implications

In terms of the funding from the Government's Weekly Support Fund, the Council must comply with the funding conditions specified. Legal Services can advise on any terms

and conditions relating to the funding agreement if required. Such conditions must be built into the Council's contract with third party contractors associated with providing works or services to the Council in relation to this project as appropriate

Legal Services will provide advice and assistance to officers as required in connection with the procurement of the reuse outlet. If the rent paid for the reuse facilities is below market rate, there may be state aid implications. Further information will be required to assess any state aid implications.

In terms of the framework agreement used for local suppliers, due diligence should be carried out to ensure it provides value for money, meets the Council's requirements and the terms and conditions are robust.

Seema Patel, Solicitor 371406

From a Property perspective, the report identifies a number of potential property issues, for example, the management of the site which is City Council owned. The Property team within Legal Services will advise officers as and when required during the development and subsequent operation of the facility.

Alex Snowden, Legal Executive 371411

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

As part our aims to reduce the area wide carbon footprint of Leicester, the Climate Change Programme of Action has a milestone target of achieving 48% of household waste being recycled by 2015, with further targets planned to be set for 2025. This is echoed by the proposed EMAS target to reduce the environmental impact of household and Council waste and minimise its landfill. The construction of a new household waste recycling facility in Leicester will be more energy efficient than the previous site, increase participation in recycling efforts through the provision of better facilities and encourage the re-use of household items – all of which will reduce the carbon emissions of the city.

As waste does not currently form part of the carbon footprint calculations for the city council's own operations, there will be no impact on these emission levels.

Louise Buckley, Graduate Project Officer (Climate Change), 372 293.

5.4 Equalities Implications

Providing easier ways for people to dispose of their waste will contribute to enhancing local quality of life in the city. Those unable to drive to the facility have access to alternative home collections of unwanted large items and garden refuse. Those able to drive to the facility but unable to unload waste will have help available to do so from staff on site. Thus all protected characteristics will benefit indirectly from the new facility, and mitigating actions are available to ensure the needs of disabled residents are still met.

The reuse facility will also provide social benefits to local people by providing low/no cost recycled furniture and household items. This will particularly benefit low income

households and households with children in poverty.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext. 374147.

5.5 Other Implications

Planning Permission for the site was granted on 9th January 2014.

An application for an Environmental Permit has been made.

6. Background information and other papers:

Not applicable

7. Summary of appendices:

Not applicable

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

Not applicable

10. If a key decision please explain reason

Executive Report to Scrutiny

Scrutiny Commission:

Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement

Date of scrutiny committee: 26th January 2015

Welfare Reform Update

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All wards
- Report author: Caroline Jackson
- Author contact details: 37 2501
- Report version number: 1.0

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report provides an update as to welfare reform initiatives impacting locally, current benefits performance statistics and future developments.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Commission is asked to note the report, and is invited to comment on the observations contained in the report.

2. Main report

National rollout of Universal Credit

- 2.1 Universal Credit (UC) rollout across the North-West region was completed by December 2014 and will then be available in almost 100 (1 in 8) Jobcentres nationally for both single people and childless couples meeting other eligibility criteria. The current caseload is approximately 18,000 claimants.
- 2.2 On 13th October 2014 the Secretary of State announced the national rollout of UC will commence from February 2015. This will be conducted in four 'tranches' – the first of 73 local authorities will take place from February to April 2015 however and will not include Leicester. It is anticipated this will involve single claimants who would otherwise claim JSA only, but will include housing costs replacing Housing Benefit awards.
- 2.3 The latest business case outlined by the DWP in October 2014 anticipates that the final new claims for 'legacy' benefits, including Housing Benefit, will be made in 2017. Migration of existing legacy benefit claimants is due to be completed by 2019 – although pensioner claims, exempt accommodation and some other exceptions will continue to have Housing Benefit administered by local authorities.

Universal Support: Delivered Locally

- 2.4 From 2013 onwards the DWP has developed the Local Services Support Framework in order to outline the support network Universal Credit will require in order to be successfully implemented. This was rebranded in October 2014 as Universal Support: Delivered Locally (US: DL).
- 2.5 The framework anticipates the development of a number of key themes, including successful partnership working between the DWP, local authorities & voluntary organisations, effective triage of vulnerable claimant's needs, appropriate referral networks and support around personal budgeting and digital inclusion needs.

- 2.6 From September 2014 eleven US:DL formal trial sites were selected to run for a 12 month period under independent audit in order to demonstrate outcomes. LCC has been invited by the DWP to become an informal trial site following internal research conducted over the last six months in preparation for US: DL, although no funding would be provided for this purpose.
- 2.7 As UC is introduced in each local authority area, Local Delivery Partnership (LDPs) are being drawn up between the DWP and local authorities - to offer appropriate services as above and to ameliorate the additional costs associated with UC, for example manual processing of UC notifications for Council Tax Reduction. No LDP has yet been drafted in respect of LCC however.

Local Welfare Provision (LWP) 2015/16 consultation

- 2.8 From April 2013 to date the transfer of LWP from the DWP Social Fund has resulted in the development of the Community Support Grant local offer and associated schemes. In December 2013 the government announced a specific LWP sum would no longer be identified in general grant funding. However, this decision has been reconsidered following judicial review and further consultation.
- 2.9 The City Mayor responded to the consultation on behalf of the Council. A copy is provided at **Appendix A**.
- 2.10 The Government's Local Government Finance settlement consultation 2015 – 16 published in December states. "Local authorities will continue to be able to offer local welfare assistance from within existing budgets, alongside a range of other services in 2015-16 if they judge it a priority in their area.....An amount relating to local welfare provision has been separately identified in each upper-tier authority's general grant, totally £129.6 million nationally.....The Government has always been clear councils should choose how best to support local welfare needs. Therefore this allocation will not be ring-fenced and we will not be placing any new duties, expectations or monitoring requirements on its use." (Appendix B, section 2.2). However it is important to stress that this is not new money, i.e. it is not a continuation of additional funding for welfare issues but merely the identification of an unring-fenced sum of money from our existing total grant.... In effect it continues to be a complete cut of this funding.

The amount identified within Leicester's existing 2015/16 funding is £1.4m, compared to the grant of £1.9m in 2014/15. Therefore no on-going welfare monies are available without a reconfiguration of the council's budget strategy (on the assumption that government's decision remains unchanged).

The consultation includes a question on this, namely "Do you agree with the Government's proposal that local welfare provision funding of £129.6m should be identified within the settlement by creating a new element distributed in line with local welfare provision funding in 2014-15?" The consultation ends on 15 January and a response is being prepared.

Future developments

- 2.10 The Big Lottery Fund is to provide the Leicester Ageing Together programme, which includes LCC, Leicester's Clinical Commissioning Group and a range of local charities,

with close to £5 million to coordinate a 'test and learn' programme on combatting isolation amongst older Leicester residents.

- 2.11 Research & Intelligence is undertaking a qualitative research project on Welfare Reform impacts. The first round of interviews has been completed on the themes of cost of living increases, financial difficulties relating to benefits, cumulative impact to wider family networks and resources for resilience, managing and coping. Social exclusion, psychological impacts and barriers to improvements are also considered. Results will be finalised and the report shared later in the year. The report identifies areas of concern and discusses opportunities to deliver support differently. Follow-up interviews will take place with collaboration with services and partners.
- 2.12 The Fair Finance City initiative commenced in the City earlier last year. A task group has been formed and chaired by the Bishop of Leicester. Members of the task group are the Diocese of Leicester, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Voluntary Action LeicesterShire and representatives from 'reaching people' and the Centre for Responsible Credit. The task group is working together to formulate a strategy to develop more equitable financial provision and develop greater resilience in communities. The group is in the early stages of setting up a steering group to move forward their ideas. The task group will work in collaboration with organisations such as money advice, financial providers and other support organisations.

Local Performance Statistics Q2 2014/15

- 2.13 For full statistics for the second quarter in respect of Local Taxation collection rates, Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction assessment timeframes, Council Tax Discretionary Relief & Discretionary Housing Payments and Community Support Grants spend, please see **Appendix B**.

Welfare reform impacts Q2 2014/15

- 2.14 The Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme has operated since April 2013 and remains unchanged. The scheme is a means tested financial discount awarded which reduces the council tax charge for the property which means the charge payer (bill payer) pays less council tax. In Leicester working age charge payers (charge payers between the ages of 18 and 62 years old) are expected to pay at least 20% of their council tax bill. The total discount award value for the year 2014/15 is £25,109,971 which financially supports 24,305 working age and 13,944 pensioner households pay their council tax bills. The Council Tax Discretionary relief fund so far this year has financially supported an additional 554 vulnerable households who are struggling to pay their bills. Both the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Council Tax Discretionary Relief fund will continue to offer financial support in 2015/16 with both policies remaining unchanged.
- 2.15 The removal of the spare room subsidy (RSRS) in April 2013 resulted in 3,844 homes in the city seeing their housing benefit reduced by an average of £16.55 per week. By quarter two 2014/15 this number had fallen to 2,716 with the average loss remaining as £16.71. 58% of the discretionary housing budget this year has been spent on supporting households affected by this reform.
- 2.16 Households affected by the benefit cap had increased from 153 homes in 2013/14 to 173

homes by the end of September 2014; an increase of 13.07%. Families in council housing have seen the greatest increase (11.3% or 5 households) and the highest weekly increase in monetary terms of 43.80% or £28.09. This means council homes affected by this reform lose on average of £64.14 a week in housing benefit. The variance in the figure is as a result of the value of the cap upon the housing benefit income. The households and amount of the cap applied are identified by the Department for Works and Pension. Whereas families affected by the cap in housing association properties have seen a slight decrease in their monetary loss of £1.13 or 2.18%. 27% of the discretionary housing budget has been awarded to homes affected by this reform.

3. Details of Scrutiny

3.1 This report has not been scrutinised.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

4.1.1 This report provides an update on national welfare reforms and their local impact. Hence there are no significant direct financial implications for the Council, although the specific Government funding for local welfare provision will stop in 2015/16 and instead becomes a nominal presentational figure in the Council's general grant from Government; and the reforms and initiatives do impact upon certain residents of the City.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081.

4.2 Legal implications

4.2.1

4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

4.3.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.
372 293

Louise Buckley
Graduate Project Officer – Climate Change 372 293

4.4 Equality Impact Assessment

4.4.1 The Revenue and Benefits Service continues to collect equalities monitoring information of those affected by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and other aspects of the Government's welfare reform agenda. It recently completed an equality impact assessment of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme one year on, reviewing its original assumptions of the likely impacts of the scheme's introduction. The main protected characteristics affected were age, disability, gender and race. It's conclusion was that people facing the greatest barriers to work are represented in higher numbers in the claims population. That includes people with disabilities, women, people with responsibility for young children (predominantly lone parents), and people who may struggle with English. The review also described the mitigating actions taken during the course of the year and the impact of these actions. The Revenue and Benefits Service will continue to review equality impacts and the effect of its mitigating actions in relation to its role in delivery of local welfare reforms in keeping with its ongoing Public Sector Equality Duty.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 No other implications.

Appendix A

Local Welfare Provision consultation response from Leicester City Council

(see next page)

Please ask for: Sir Peter Soulsby
Direct Line: 0116 454 0001
Our Ref: 2014/NOV/PS/MH
Date: 19th November 2014



Welfare Reform Division
Department for Communities and Local Government
4th Floor Fry Building
NW Quarter
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Sir/Madam

Local Welfare Provision in 2015/16 – Consultation Response

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to respond to the above. I am responding on behalf of the City Council.

Context for the consultation

Following the Child Poverty Action Group's judicial review challenge to the Government's decision to cease grant funding for Local Welfare Assistance Schemes, the Government agreed to reconsider its decision to cease funding for local welfare provision. The Consent Order required the DWP, DCLG and the Treasury to:

- Compile the ongoing review of local welfare provision;
- Conduct an 'appropriate' consultation;
- Consider the impact on equality and discrimination; and
- Make a new decision on funding for local welfare provision for 2015/16.

The response below relates to two of the above items i.e. the appropriateness of the consultation and the consideration of the impact on equality and discrimination.

Additionally, I believe that proposals to remove the funding from local government are a clear breach of the new burdens directive, given that the function has been transferred from the DWP. Consequently, it is unacceptable that local government should be asked for views on how to remove it.

The consultation is considered to be not 'appropriate'

The recent Supreme Court judgement (R vs London Borough of Haringey, 29 October 2014) identifies key considerations on minimum requirements for statutory consultation which can be applied to the consultation at hand. The circumstances for the two cases are similar – views are sought on options put forward on financial arrangements that have a direct bearing on the parties being consulted.

Para 39 of the judgement states:

Meaningful public consultation in this particular decision-making process...requires that the consultees should be provided not only with information about the draft scheme, but also with an outline of the realistic alternatives, and an indication of the main reasons for the authority's adoption of the draft scheme. That follows, in this context, from the general obligation to let consultees know "what the proposal is and why it is under positive consideration, telling them enough (which may be a good deal) to enable them to make an intelligent response".

The options presented in 'Local welfare provision in 2015/16, a consultation document' only include those whereby local authorities assume responsibility for funding local welfare provision. The option of the Government continuing to fund local welfare provision has not been given. This is a realistic alternative as it continues the status quo.

No information is presented in the consultation document giving local authorities reasons for the DWP's proposal of ceasing funding for the scheme and having local authorities pick it up. Therefore, on the basis of the Supreme Court judgement referenced above, this consultation is not 'appropriate' and does not meet the criteria set out in the judgement as to what should be expected in regard to options presented. Consideration must be widened to include all 'realistic' options including that of the current status quo, unless substantiated by specific reasons as to why this is not an option. Therefore, any decision arising from this consultation exercise will not meet the Consent Order referred to above.

The DWP has failed to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal to cease grant funding for Local Welfare Assistance Schemes is set within the broader policy context of the Government's welfare reforms and the introduction of the Universal Credit. These are very much dependent on people not in work moving into work, and thereby reducing their reliance upon benefits to supplement their household incomes. Recent evidence has shown that the post recessionary period has not resulted in these outcomes being achieved, and that many households in work have been negatively affected by the implementation of the Government's welfare reforms ('The local impacts of welfare reform; an assessment of cumulative impacts and mitigations, Local Government Association and Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, August 2013).

Therefore in keeping with the Court of Appeal judgement in the case of *Bracking v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions*, 6 November 2013, if the intended legislative reform is 'stalled or diluted' with subsequent negative impacts on those affected, then the application of the PSED may need to be revisited.

Para 55 ...as the fifth Brown principle explains, the public sector equality duty is a continuing one, and....may well need due consideration and upon after reflection by public bodies developing and implementing the policy....in this case. If the intended legislative reformis stalled or diluted....the application of the PSED may need to be revisited in the light of these developments. Similarly, this will need to be the case if the level of Treasury funding...is so austere as to leave no option but to reverse progress already achieved....

These impacts should be revisited by the Department of Works and Pension (DWP) and a thorough assessment of the equality impacts of those potentially affected by the proposal should be undertaken by them. **34**

However, as stated by the DWP's March 2011 Equality Impact Assessment, "at present we do not intend to monitor the impact of the policy as this will cease to be DWP business" (para 29 of the assessment). The assessment continues, stating that "upon the introduction of local support, responsibility will rest with local authorities...." (para 30).

The importance of this as a policy issue cannot be understated. In the DWP's October 2011 Impact Assessment, in the section "What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?" the DWP states that "Government intervention is necessary in order to maximise the impact of funds currently allocated to CLs and CCGs (precursors to local welfare assistance schemes) on the most vulnerable people in society." Therefore, the ongoing monitoring of potential adverse impacts in keeping with the PSED should have been undertaken by the DWP.

The reconsideration of equality impacts as part of their reflection of the original policy's implementation should inform the decision at hand (as stated in the Consent Order referred to above). The key issue for exploration is what mitigating actions would be required to address the implications of failed policy assumptions. If the DWP is to meet its equalities obligations, there should be a clear and robust assessment of likely need among those 'vulnerable' people dependent upon benefits and the resources required to effectively address that need. These should inform what should be considered in terms of future local welfare provision. The right questions have not been asked.

Yours faithfully



Peter Soulsby
City Mayor

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

Peter Soulsby

Leicester City Council, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ
TELEPHONE: (0116) 454 0001 themayor@leicester.gov.uk www.leicester.gov.uk

Appendix B

Benefits Claim processing times

Average days to assess a claim 2014/15 (up to 30/9/2014)		Last Year	Targets
New Claims	23.63 days	23 days	22 days
Changes	15.14 days	15 days	15 days

Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) second quarter 2014/15

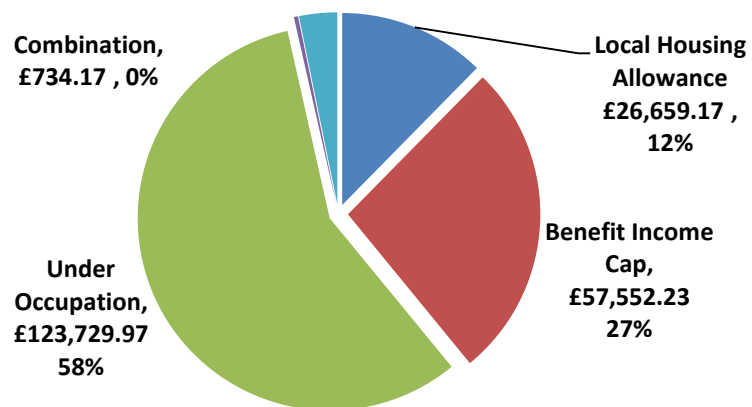
Council Tax Reduction Scheme Working age as at 1.4.13		Council Tax Reduction Scheme Working age as at 30.9.14	
No of cases	Award £m	No of cases	Award £m
26,724	£13,931,643	24,305	£13,741,703
Council Tax Reduction Scheme Pensioner Claims as at 1.4.13		Council Tax Reduction Scheme Pensioner Claims as at 30.9.14	
No of cases	Award £m	No of cases	Award £m
15,439	£11,981,328	13,944	£11,368,268
Council Tax Discretionary Relief Working age awards for 13/14		Council Tax Discretionary Relief Working age awards @ 30.9.14	
No of cases	Award £m	No of cases	Award £m
1935	£260,569.57	554	£91,663.81
Council Tax Discretionary Relief Pensioner awards for 13/14		Council Tax Discretionary Relief Pensioner claims @ 30.9.14	
No of cases	Award £m	No of cases	Award £m
10	£1,666.60	3	£372.33

Leicester's Council Tax Discretionary fund for 2014/15 is £315,000 plus carried forward underspend from 13/14 of £99,845 giving a total possible fund for 14/15 of £414,845.

Local taxation and recovery

Collectable debt (Council Tax)		In year collectable debt target	Collected against the target	No of summons issued to date	Value of summons to date
13/14	£98.4m	94.75%	94.81%	21,430	£12.430m
14/15	£102.74	95%	53.99% (as of 30/9/2014)	13,717 (as of 30/9/14)	£8.873m

Discretionary Housing Payments 2014/15 (Second Quarter)



- Leicester's DHP fund for 2014/15 is **£828,553.00**;
- At 30/9/2014 we have spent **£337,319.19**.

Community Support Grant (CSG)

Table showing Claims made for 2013/14 and 2014 (up to 30/9/2014)

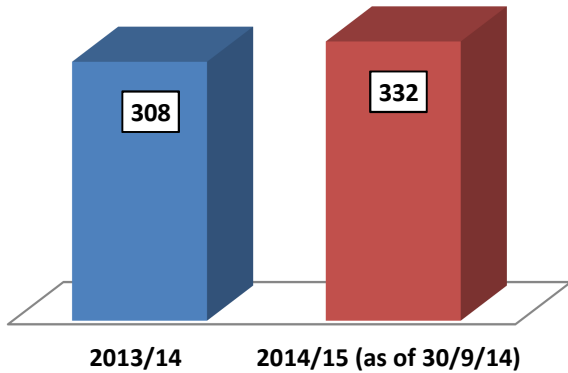
	Claims 2013/14	Claims (30/9/14)	Awards 2013/14	Awards (30/9/14)	Refused 2013/14	Refused (30/9/14)
Crisis	1394	377	873	254	514	119
Support	1219	451	589	241	541	156
Total	2,613	828	1462	495	1055	275

- Our average award for crisis is **£65.40**;
- Our average award for Support is **£520.21**;
- Our average award has increased in value since the first quarter of 2014/15.
- Estimated spend for 14/15 on goods and furniture is £350,000
- Estimated spend for 14/15 on emergency food including food vouchers is £52,000

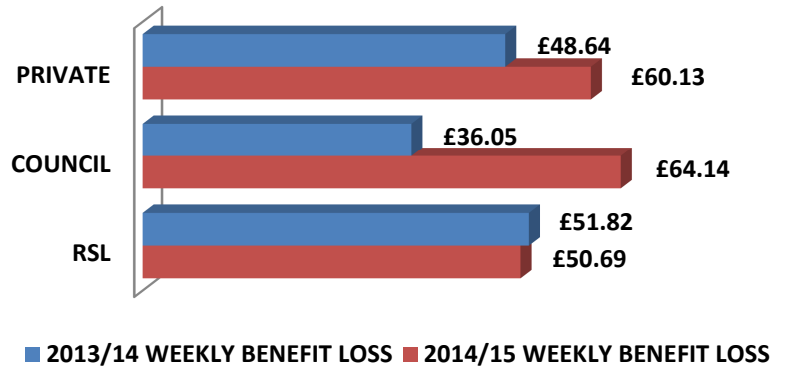
Benefit Income Cap (BIC) cases

BENEFIT INCOME CAP				Total DWP reported in payment cases		HA	Average benefit loss	COUNCIL	Average benefit loss	PRIVATE	Average benefit loss
2013/14				153		32	£51.82	44	£36.05	77	£48.64
2014/15 (as of 30/9/14)				173		39	£50.69	49	£64.14	85	£60.13
% INCREASE/DECREASE	13.07%	21.88%	-2.18%	11.36%	43.80%	10.39%	19.11%				

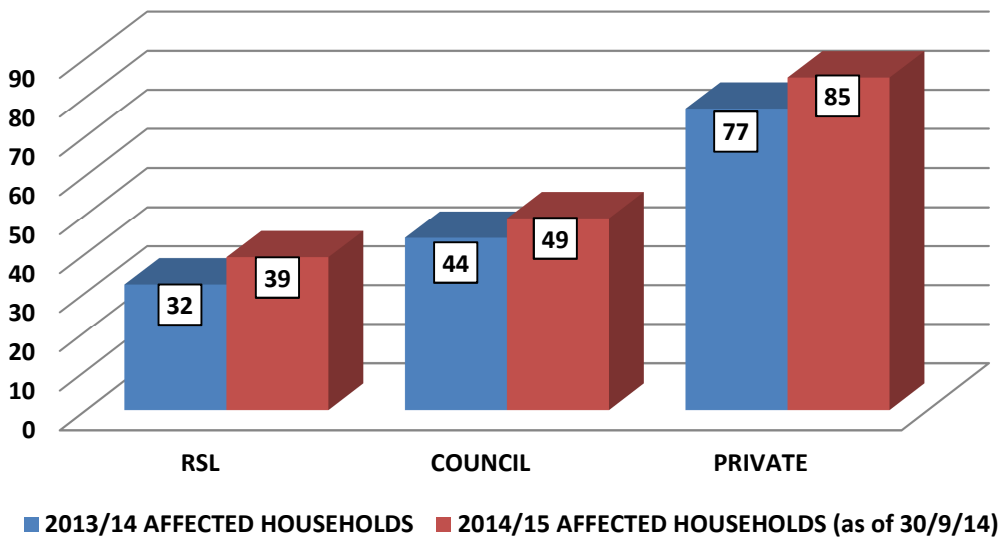
Total number of cases reported to LA by DWP



Average weekly benefit loss



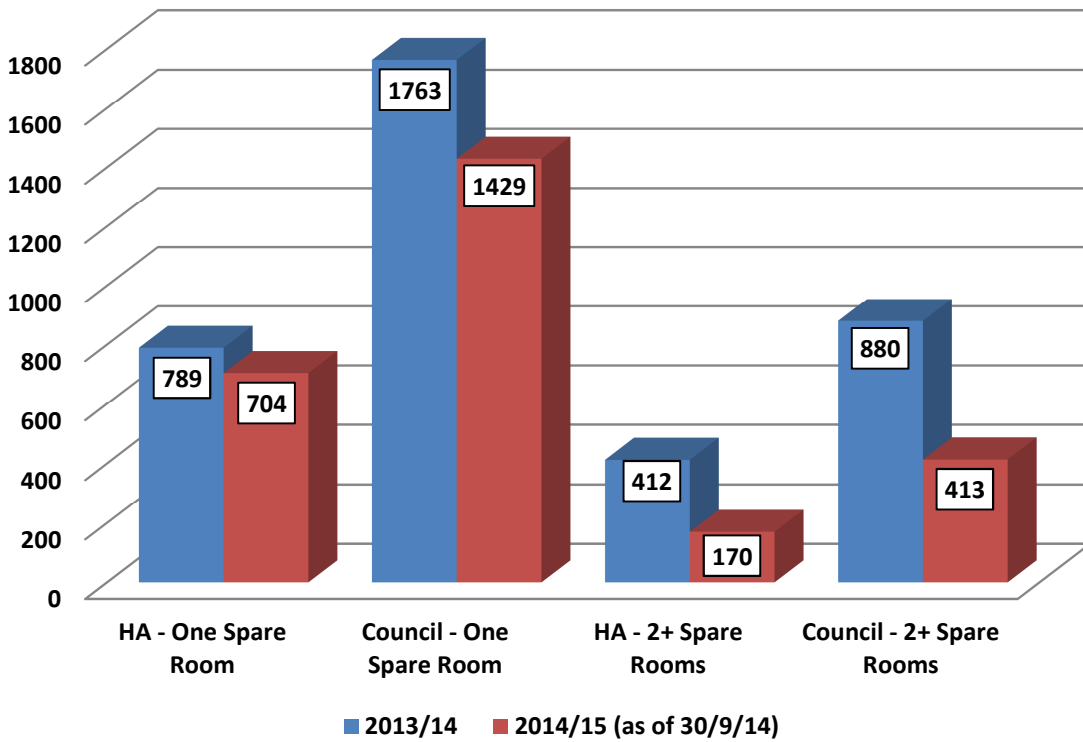
Live cases by tenure type



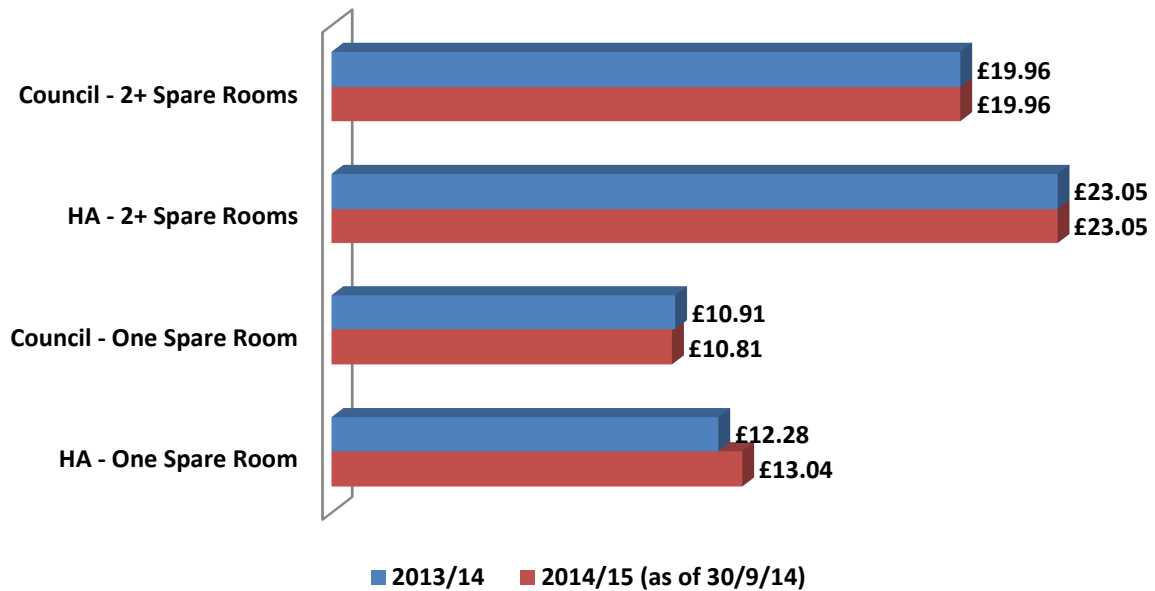
Under-occupancy cases

UNDER OCCUPANCY	TOTAL	One Spare Room - HA	Av. benefit loss	One Spare Room - Council	Av. benefit loss	2+ Spare Rooms - HA	Av. benefit loss	2+ Spare Rooms - Council	Av. benefit loss
2013/14 (as at 3/4/13)	3844	789	£12.28	1763	£10.91	412	£23.05	880	£19.96
2014/15 (as of 30/9/14)	2716	704	£13.04	1429	£10.81	170	£23.05	413	£19.96
% INCREASE/DECREASE	-29.44%	-10.77%	6.19%	-18.95%	-0.92%	-58.78%	0.00%	-53.07%	0.00%

Number of households affected by under-occupancy



Under occupancy - average benefit loss per week



Executive Decision Report to Scrutiny

Scrutiny Commission:

Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement

Date of scrutiny committee: 26th January 2015

**Council Tax Reduction (local) Scheme a year on.
Including – Equality Impact Assessment Review**

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: V.1

1. Summary

- 1 The Authority adopted a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTR), which replaced Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from 1st April 2013. This scheme was introduced as part of the Government's wider Welfare Reform review and brought with it 10% reduced funding, a result of which council tax payers who had not paid the council tax in previous years, were now required to pay at least 20%.
- 2 This report summarises the impacts of the LCTR scheme after one year in operation, reviewing its Equality Impact Assessment evaluating the impact upon protected groups and the support in place to mitigate the impact and its effectiveness whilst balancing the council's obligation to collect the charge.

2. Recommendations

- The scrutiny commission is asked to note and comment upon the continuation of the Council Tax Reduction scheme until March 2016.
- The scrutiny commission is asked to note and comment upon the equality impacts and considering mitigating these impacts through the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy (CTDR), which is funded to support protected groups and those facing financial difficulties.
- The scrutiny commission is asked to note and comment upon the continuation of the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy until March 2016.
- The scrutiny commission is asked to note the precepting authorities have withdrawn funding support to the Council Tax Discretionary Relief from April 2014.
- The scrutiny commission is asked to note and comment upon the current Council Tax Reduction scheme and the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy has not been revised but will be reviewed in readiness for April 2016.

3. Main report:

Background

- 3.1 In the Spending Review 2010 it was announced that the CTB Scheme would be abolished and councils were expected to set up localised support schemes but with a 10% cut in funding nationally compared to that available under the CTB scheme. After considering various scheme options and extensive modelling of the impact of those options, a localised scheme of support was proposed and

following consultation; it was implemented from 1st April 2013.

3.2 Whilst the Government decided to make savings in this area, it was clear in its commitment to protect certain groups from the impact of the savings, in particular pensioners. As a consequence, the cut in funding has principally been borne by the city's working age population.

3.3 The council's scheme contains the following elements which are designed as the primary means by which the savings under the scheme are delivered:

1. A maximum eligible award of 80% of the total council tax due
2. The maximum award is fixed at Band B
3. The amount of capital held by the claimant must not exceed £6000
4. Financial support is limited to awards above £3.60 per week
5. The Second Adult Rebate scheme has been discontinued

The result of the above is that every working age household must pay a minimum of 20% towards their council tax bill. The service's records shows that for 2013/14, this equates to £3.79 per week for a couple living in a band A property (£197.85 per year) and £4.43 for couple in a band B property (£230.83 per year) and 94% of households in this group live in properties that are in band A or B.

Mitigation

3.4 In order to mitigate the impact of the reduced support on this group, some of whom had not paid any council tax for a number of years, a targeted "talk to us" publicity campaign ran during 2013. Anyone affected by this and the wider welfare reforms changes was encouraged to talk to the council.

3.5 Other actions taken to assist this client groups are:

1. Additional prompt to pay letters have been sent to this client group.
2. A "softer" recovery approach has been taken with additional reminders being issued before recovery action commences.
3. Where the debt is not paid, the council has sought to reduce the burden of debt for all households in the city through negotiating lower court costs.
4. The council has a Council Tax Discretionary Relief (CTDR) policy (further details under 3.7), which can assist those who are experiencing particular financial difficulty.

3.6 Council tax collection against this group is strong. The service has also been tracking the recovery profile of the 16,000+ 'new' charge payers. The collectable debt for this group is £3.5m and represents 3.59% of the total collectable council tax debt as at 1st April 2013. Additional prompts and non-statutory reminders have been included in the recovery process to encourage payment and engagement.

3.7 Council tax legislation contains a provision which allows councils to award financial assistance for households where there is exceptional hardship. This is under Section 13A of Local Government Finance Act 1992. The service has used this provision in its CTDR policy. The precepting authorities (Fire and

Police) have been asked to contribute to this fund. See table below.

2013/14	Contribution (£)
Leicester City	265,791
Leicestershire Police Authority	37,650
Leicestershire Fire Authority	11,559
Total:	315,000

A fund of £414,845 remains available for the 2014/15 financial year.

How many council tax payers have received additional help and have been awarded Council Tax Discretionary Relief?

Year	Number of Council Tax payers supported	Total relief awarded
2013/14	1,946	£263,267.71

A breakdown of the protected groups given this additional help is shown at **Appendix A**.

- 3.8 Although over 1,900 of the most vulnerable members of the community were given assistance via the CTDR fund, it is likely that others who are struggling to pay their council tax payers are also eligible to apply. The service is therefore proactively trying to identify these taxpayers through its records and offer assistance where it is required.
- 3.9 The billing and recovery process is outlined in **Appendix B** with process maps comparing the 'business as usual' recovery detail alongside the additional communication activity for the new payers, (also called welfare recovery payers). Analysis at the end of the first year (31st March 2014) shows the following:
1. 9,501 of 16,654 households previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit have paid in full.
 2. 2,542 are paying their charges by deductions from benefit
 3. 2,185 are paying by direct debit
 4. 3,847 engaged with the council and requested a different payment date (which could include payment by direct debit).
- 3.10 The service also operates a fair debt collection policy which aims to assist council tax payers facing financial difficulty payers (or any debtor owing monies to the council) make an affordable payment arrangement, balanced with the council's requirement to collect monies owed. At every stage of the recovery process council tax payers are encouraged to "talk to us" for advice, before the recovery action and any associated costs escalate.

The council's main customer service centre hosts a number of debt advice

providers including the Government backed Money Advice Service and the MoneyWise debt advice offer. Where it becomes apparent that a council tax payer requires help to negotiate other debts, officers in the service will make an appointment on behalf of the council taxpayer. Council taxpayers may also seek support from CAB Leicestershire through their website or offices located on Charles Street.

Options for change

- 3.11 The council's LCTR scheme was implemented from 1st April 2013. A review of the impact of the scheme upon charge payers assesses whether the scheme has a neutral, positive or negative impact upon protected groups or the persons highlighted in the equality impact assessment who may have been most affected by the change.
- 3.12 Like other councils, Leicester retained the fundamental elements of the previous CTB scheme, with amendments to mitigate the shortfall in the Government's grant. Calculation of CTB and claims for CTR scheme use a similar means tested assessment process as that for Housing Benefit. Consequently while the Housing Benefit scheme remains with the Local Authority to administer there has been minimal increases in processing costs.

However, the Housing Benefit payment /assessment process is expected to change when the Government increases its Universal Credit roll out programme. The roll out in the city is expected sometime late 2016. At this point the service will undertake a separate assessment which will demand significantly lower processing costs. What this looks like has yet to be determined. We recommend the authority begins to explore the options to simplify the assessment process and explore scheme and delivery options for the future.

Outcomes of the Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.13 The equality impact assessment has been able to reach some conclusions about the impact upon most of the claims caseload with protected characteristics. It has been possible to reach conclusions in relation to the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender, and Race. There is an incidence of households with these protected characteristics within the claims population, because of the barriers to work which are faced. The service does not conclude that the remaining protected characteristics are unaffected by these changes, rather that there is insufficient data to reach conclusions.
- 3.14 The Government's policy to "Localise" decision making in local welfare relief on Council Tax was proposed at the same time as a cut in funding. As a direct consequence of the Government's decision to protect pensioners from the impact of change, the cost of the change is borne entirely by the working age part of the claim population.
- 3.15 As a result of the introduction of the LCTR scheme, the collectable debt during the 2013/14 financial year increased by over £10m. The awareness campaign run by the Council has succeeded in "educating" the majority of working age Council Tax payers previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit, in that the charge due within the financial year was paid. A large proportion also engaged

with the Council and opted to pay the charge by a preferred method of payment such as direct debit.

3.16 However although over 1,900 of the most vulnerable members of the community were given assistance via the CTDR fund last year, it is likely that others who are struggling to pay their Council Tax payers are also eligible to apply. Further work is therefore required by the Council to proactively identify and offer assistance where it is required. This work is in progress and will continue to be monitored.

3.17 The actual making or revising of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is a matter for Full Council. Under section 67(2) (aa) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as revised by the 2012 Act). However the Executive may consider whether to make or revise the scheme. Therefore we recommend the executive reviews the current Council Tax Reduction scheme and the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy in 2015 and recommend to Full council any revisions.

3.18 The executive agreed the following actions on the 16th December 2014:

- The executive recommended continuing with the Council Tax Reduction scheme until March 2016.
- The executive noted the equality impacts and consider mitigating these impacts through the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy (CTDR), which is funded to support protected groups and those facing financial difficulties.
- The executive recommended continuing the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy until March 2016.
- The executive noted the precepting authorities have withdrawn funding support to the Council Tax Discretionary Relief from April 2014.
- The executive recommended not revising the current Council Tax Reduction scheme and the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy but have recommended reviewing these policies in readiness for April 2016.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

Council tax benefit used to be reimbursed by the Government on the basis of the amount awarded, which the Council claimed each year. In effect, it operated as if the Government was paying council tax on behalf of claimants.

The new scheme does not do this. Instead, the Council grants discounts to those in receipt of local tax support, reducing the total amount of tax collectible. The Council is partially compensated for the loss of tax through Revenue Support Grant and partially through the amount of business rates we are permitted to retain. Total revenue support grant will fall from £109m in 2014/15 to £77m in 2015/16. The amount available for local tax support is not itemised within this total.

Mark Noble
Head of Finance (Financial Strategy)

5.2 Legal implications

The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination of people sharing protected characteristics which are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. There is also a duty to promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those sharing a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not do so.

Kamal Adatia
City Barrister and Head of Standards

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

Louise Buckley, Graduate Project Officer (Climate Change), 372 293

5.4 Equalities Implications

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a continuing duty. The service has undertaken a separate comprehensive impact analysis of those affected by the council tax changes and those who have received Council Tax Discretionary Relief (CTDR) based upon their financial vulnerability. Their analysis confirms that those individuals who continue to face barriers to work experience the most difficulty in paying their portion of Council Tax. Appendix A presents a profile of those in receipt of CTDR, the greatest proportion being single, White and women. The service has been proactive in seeking to mitigate the negative impact of those facing difficulty in paying the Council Tax charge by providing a range of means available to support them in making payments based on their personal circumstances. It will continue to monitor the equality impacts of the Council Tax Scheme and those taking up the CTDR.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext. 374147

5.5 Other Implications

None

6. Background information and other papers:

- Local Government Finance Act 1992:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/14/contents>
- The Welfare Reform Act 2012; <http://www.DepartmentforWorkandPension.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/welfare-reform-act-2012>
- The Localism Act 2011;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf
- The Equality Act 2010; <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/notes/contents>
- The Local Government Finance Bill;
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/local-government-finance-bill/-/journal_content/56/10171/3752842/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE
- and
- other legislation in relation to Vulnerable Groups including but not limited to the Child Poverty Act 2010;
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/notes/contents>
- and
- Social Security Act 1986.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/50/contents>

7. Summary of appendices:

1. Appendix A – breakdown of the protected groups given additional help from the CTDR fund.
2. Appendix B – Process maps showing the billing and recovery process comparing the ‘business as usual’ recovery detail alongside the additional communication activity for our welfare recovery accounts

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

Yes

9. Is this a “key decision”?

No

10. If a key decision please explain reason

Leicester City Council

Revenues & Benefits Service

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

Impact Assessment (IA)

Version 5.2

September 2014

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Executive Summary

On 1st April 2013 the Government replaced Council Tax Benefit with Council Tax Reduction. The purpose of this report is to assess, one year on, the effect the Council's local Council Tax Reduction Scheme has had on different groups who are protected under the Equality Act and to ensure that the Council has met its public sector equality duty in the design of the scheme.

The Government made a 10% cut in the costs of Council Tax Benefit which in the City's case was £3m. This was consequently a key consideration in the design of Leicester's local scheme.

An Oxfam Research paper "Multiple Cuts for the Poorest Families" states.

These cuts to benefits are not uniform. Whether a family is affected and by how much depends on a range of factors. For Council Tax support, it depends on the local authority the family lives in. For the overall benefit cap it largely depends on family size and housing costs. For the under-occupation penalty it depends on the number of bedrooms in the property. For the LHA changes it depends on the cost and demand for rented housing in the local area.

But all of these cuts apply irrespective of a family's income or their ability to cope. Of affected families, 1.75 million are among the poorest, with incomes that are low enough to qualify for a basic cash benefit. This is the minimum level of support provided by the welfare state to the poorest families to cover normal day to day living expenses. If their other benefits are cut, this basic level of support is compromised.

There ceases to be an 'absolute minimum' provided by government to prevent people from having to walk the breadline. It now varies in different parts of the country and in different tenures in unpredictable ways.

This absolute minimum needs to be instated and it should apply regardless of local authority or tenure; and it must be high enough to mean that those at the minimum level are not forced to walk the breadline. The government must first commit to the principle and then decide its level.

As Welfare Reforms have now begun to impact across the city it is time to reflect upon the scheme purpose and objects as a single policy.

1 Introduction and Overview

1.1 Background

In 2011, the Government made a commitment to implementing the most significant changes to national welfare systems that have been seen in at least thirty years. The changes to Council Tax Benefit took effect from April 2013.

1.2 This Report

The purpose of this report is to assess the impact after one year of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme adopted by the Council, on the different groups who are protected under the Equality Act. By identifying the actual effects, the report seeks to ensure that the Council is meeting its public sector equality duty. This report is constructed to enable the council to understand the policy and its impact upon the client group and the council's recovery capacity.

2 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme

2.1 Overview

This section explains the key points about the Council Tax Reduction scheme which needed to be implemented from April 2013, It is to be stressed that the Government has attempted the most significant changes to welfare that have been seen for at least 30 years. In summary, the changes to welfare are as follows:

- From **April 2013**, the Council implemented a replacement scheme for Council Tax Benefit;
- From **April 2013**, the Council introduced Local Welfare Provision as Community Support Grant with a budget of £1.6m. This support combines financial assistance to both welfare and low income households as crisis payments and support payments for specific purposes.
- From **April 2013** Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy (RSRS) was introduced, popularly known as the 'bedroom tax.' This change limits the Housing Benefit award in social housing where the household is under occupying the premises. Average loss per household in the City is £11 per week for a single room reduction and £19 per week for one or more rooms. This affected over 3,000 residents in the city.
- From **11th August 2013** the Benefit Income Cap was introduced in Leicester. This change reduces the Housing Benefit award where income from working-age benefits exceeds £500 per week for families and £350 for a single adult, although claimants receiving Working Tax Credits or disability benefits demonstrating an inability to work are excluded from this restriction. The Benefit Income Cap is applied through a reduction in Housing Benefit entitlement to a minimum of 50 pence per week, affecting on average 160 households in Leicester.

It is likely that affected households will have to use money from their other benefits to pay towards the rent for their home. Currently other benefits will be paid in full and will not be reduced - therefore total income from benefits may still exceed the benefit cap threshold. Once Universal Credit is introduced the Benefit Income Cap will be applied in full by restricting Universal Credit payments to the level of the cap.

2.2 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Overview

The Government administers welfare support through two different Departments; the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The DCLG have driven the programme for the reform of Council Tax Benefit.

Under DCLG proposals, Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was abolished from April 2013, and by that time each Council needed to have in place a local scheme for the administration of Council Tax Reduction, as the replacement scheme is known. Previously, Government grant for Council Tax Benefit was designed to match actual expenditure, and was claimed at the end of the year. Grant for the Council Tax Reduction scheme is cash limited, and is intended to cost the Government 10% less than the Council Tax Benefit scheme. Local schemes are therefore expected to be less generous than the Council Tax Benefit scheme.

Overall Financial Impact: The Council

Under Council Tax Benefit arrangements, which have applied since 1993, the lowest income households identified by a statutory means test were entitled to a maximum of 100% benefit award against Council Tax Liability.

The Government decided to make savings in this area, and has calculated a 10% cut in the overall cost of Council Tax Benefit which has been applied to each Council. However, the Government has made it clear that regulations will protect key claim groups from the impact of this saving, including in particular pensioners.

So while the overall saving has been applied to the whole cost of Council Tax Benefit awards, some client groups (called "Vulnerable People") have been protected from the impact. This group includes pensioners and other groups we determine locally. There have as a consequence been Council Tax payers who are disproportionately affected by this change, some of whom may not have been responsible for Council Tax payments previously. Under the adopted scheme, it has been the working age claimants who have broadly, been the claim group that have borne the burden of the savings applied under this scheme.

Overall Financial Impact: Claim Groups

Leicester's Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims analysis by age overall is:

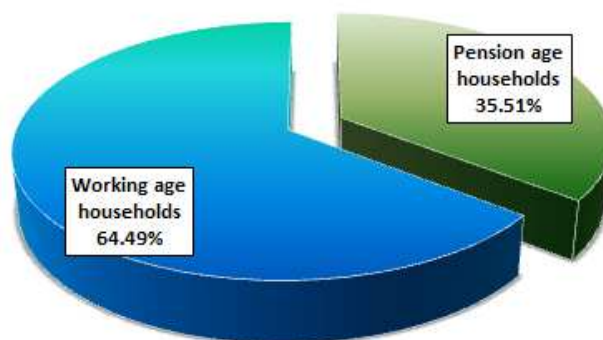


Figure 1: Overall Claim Distribution

In very broad terms, and with the working age population being 64.49% of the Council's caseload, the effect of a 10% saving on the whole budget is around 16% if no vulnerable groups are defined locally.

2.3 Welfare Support

From April 2013, the Council became responsible for the disbursement of two additional discretionary payments, some of which have previously been administered by other agencies. The payments under the “Welfare Support” package of changes include:

- Responsibility for the payment of Crisis Loans and Community Care grants previously administered by the DWP actual value £1.61m; and
- Continuing responsibility for the administration of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) with the DWP, actual value £813,252.

In addition, there are also locally administered funds under section 117 of the Housing Act, and other discretionary disbursements including those completed by the Council’s Adults and Children’s Social Care teams. There are also a range of third sector organisations which are active within the City and which administer a range of different funds on behalf of different client groups.

2.4 Other Changes in Welfare from 2013

From October 2013, the DWP’s proposed changes to national welfare payments under the Universal Credit system began in earnest.

Under current Government plans, transitional arrangements to the new Universal Credit system began October 2013, with a phased implementation by claim type. New claimants from October 2013 were the first to go through the new system in isolated pilot sites, with other claim groups including existing claimants of working and of pensionable age coming later from November 2014. Under current government proposals, Universal Credit is a single payment to successful claimants for all living costs, including for housing costs (rent) where applicable.

Welfare Reform Time table		
Date	Change	Notes
April 2014	Help to Work	Claimants returning from the Work Programme will go onto one of three intensive modes of support, determined by JCP advisor
April 2014	Local Housing Allowance	Uprating limited to 1%
October 2015	Personal independence payments	Reassessment of remaining DLA caseload for PIP begins
April 2016	Retirement pension	New single tier pension to be implemented
2017	Universal credit	Every eligible person to be claiming UC

Table 1: Welfare reform timetable

2.5 Summary of the Council's Adopted Scheme

During the summer of 2012, the Council used the impact analysis process to complete a series of models and to reach interim conclusions of the most appropriate approach for the Local Scheme. The Council's final proposed scheme was adopted for formal consultation on 5th September 2012, and in accordance with published DCLG intended requirements, the Council issued a formal invitation to the Major Precepting Authorities shortly before consultation commenced. The Council formally adopted Leicester's scheme on 31st January 2013.

The Council's scheme contains the following elements which are designed as the primary means by which the savings under the scheme are delivered:

1. The application of a maximum eligible amount of Council Tax within the calculation of 80% of the total tax due; and
2. Additionally, the application of a maximum amount of Council Tax fixed at Band B of the Council's Council Tax charges.

In addition to the above primary delivery elements of the model, the Council's scheme also contain the following features:

3. That the amount of capital held by the claimant may not exceed £6,000;
4. That the scheme for Second Adult Rebate will be discontinued for working age households only;
5. That the approach for backdated awards was retained;
6. That the minimum amount of Benefit which will be payable may be set at £3.60 per week.
7. That the disability premiums held within Council Tax Benefit legislation were retained to financially support disabled households.
8. That Child Care income disregards were retained to support working households remain in work.
9. That income from War Widows pensions continued to be disregarded to support this vulnerable group.

3 Overall Impact Assessment

3.1 Overview

This section attempts to summarise the key impacts which the council considered may have arisen following the implementation of the Council’s Local Scheme. This approach attempts to consider those impacts, where it is possible, with reference to the “Protected Characteristics” which the Council has a duty to consider.

3.2 Summary of Impacts by Household Type

Within the following table, we summarise the impacts which may be considered in relation to segments of the local population eligible to receive Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. There are some impacts of the overall scheme which are likely to be common to all people receiving Council Tax Reduction under the Council’s Local Scheme from April 2013, and those are shown at section 3.3 below.

The Council’s summary of impacts shown in this section is underpinned by a variety of data sources, including:

- The research which has been completed by the Council to support the preparation of the Impact Analysis of the Council Tax Reduction scheme;
- The research completed by the Council for the individual household impacts of the CTR scheme, and to profile a detailed analysis of more than 20 different household types, explaining key impacts of the proposed changes on those households¹; and
- Other sources of appropriate external and internal research which are, where referenced, specifically explained with footnotes or otherwise.

The data within the following table is drawn from the Council’s Revenues and Benefits records at the 31st March 2014.

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number
Pensioner Age Claimant Households					
1.	Pensioner Claims (All)	None. Under Government proposals, pensioners will receive full protection from the changes. The Council has no discretion over the decision to protect pensioners	Age Disability	15,278	15,564 715

¹ Leicester City Council, 2012 “The Introduction of CTR: Customer Scenarios”

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number
Working Age Claimant Households					
2.	Working Age (All)	<p>The whole working Age population has borne the impacts of the scheme equally.</p> <p>However some groups with protected characteristics face the greatest barriers to work and as such are disproportionately represented within the claims population. This includes people with disabilities, people with responsibility for young children, and people who may struggle with English.</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>Race</p>	25,037	<p>27,948</p> <p>1525</p> <p>9819</p> <p>13,666</p> <p>4463</p> <p>3715</p> <p>1487</p> <p>27</p> <p>7962</p> <p>367</p> <p>479</p> <p>13,241</p>

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number	
3.	Single Parent, up to 2 children	Single parent families have higher numbers of claimants who are female. Women who are single parents and receiving CTR may therefore disproportionately receive the impacts of payment of the tax, and of enforcement actions taken to recover unpaid tax. ² Their ability to find sustainable and meaningful work is exacerbated three fold.	Age	12,361 ³	6,317	
			Disability	This data was estimated.	148	
			Gender	Female	170	5116
				Male		326
				Not Known		875
			Race	Asian		471
				Black		396
				Chinese		5
				White		2220
				Mixed heritage		90
Other		2965				
Not Known						

² Warwick Business School and Coventry Women's' Voices, 2011

³ Figure is for all working age single parent households

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number
4.	Single parent, 3 or more children	In addition, there is some evidence that welfare reforms are likely to give greater financial impact upon households with higher numbers of children. Their ability to find sustainable and meaningful work is exacerbated three fold. Some BME households have higher numbers of children, and women are more likely to be a primary carer.	Age Disability Gender Female Male Not Known Race Asian Black Chinese White Mixed heritage Other Not Known		2,017 59 6899 385 1051 154 231 0 697 40 34 862
5.	Couple, no children	No equality issues identified other than at 2. above.		Not calculated	1,898
6.	Couple, up to 2 children	No equality issues identified other than as 2. above.			2,315

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number
7.	Couple 3 or more children	There is some evidence that welfare reforms are likely to give greater financial impact upon households with higher numbers of children. Some BME households have higher numbers of children, and women are more likely to be a primary carer.	Gender Race Asian Black Chinese White Mixed heritage Other Not Known	1,498	937 143 66 0 281 8 27 412
8.	Households with a disabled adult/ children	The impact of the payment of Council Tax upon households which are dealing with disability. The barriers which people with disability have to the workplace. The requirements specific to the enforcement of unpaid tax and of goods protected from distress.	Disability	4,225	2,239

No.	Household Type	Equality Implications for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected	Potential Number Estimated June 2012	Actual Number
9.	New and emergent community: People who may struggle with English	The barriers which are present to the workplace for those who do not have or who struggle with English. The issues in relation to enforcement of unpaid tax for households in which there is limited understanding of English.	Race	See appendix 2 for overall ONS estimates of diversity at December 2012	Same as previous estimate. In appendix 2 please find a heat map which shows the population distribution in the city where speaking English well or not at all.
10	Pregnancy and maternity	The barriers to the workplace which may be present to women who are pregnant or have recently given birth.	Pregnancy and maternity	17 cases currently in payment	71 cases currently in payment
11	Households responsible for caring for others including for children	The barriers which may be present to the workplace and with regard to those households with responsibility for caring for others including for disabled children. Estimates shown are in respect of all carers in payment.	Age, Disability	352 Carers in payment	396

Table 2: Impacts by Household Type

There are additional protected characteristics under the Equality Act which could also be disproportionately represented within the claims population because of barriers they are likely to experience to work, but for which the Council currently does not have sufficient data within Revenues and Benefits records to reach any conclusions. These include gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Council asks charge payers to supply this information however the charge payer may decline to do so.

3.3 The Impacts of the changes: All Households

The Local Scheme seeks not to disadvantage any particular group. However, people facing Council Tax liabilities under the changes will experience negative impacts because of the requirement that they contribute towards Council Tax. People with disabilities, people with responsibility for young children (which includes greater numbers of women as the primary carer) and people who are very recent migrants to the UK and who may have little knowledge of English all face greater barriers to the workplace.

Nonetheless the principle impacts which are faced by all claimants under the Council's proposed scheme may be summarised as follows:

- It is highly likely that the overall impact of the whole package of welfare reforms will affect some households more than others. Pensioner households, for example, continue to enjoy greater national political support for welfare, while the financial pressure of change will most keenly be felt by working age families. **The Council's research suggests that younger families, and single younger claimants may face greater losses than older pensioner claimants;**
- Under the Council's scheme, all of those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction will be required to pay something towards their Council Tax. Under current Government proposals, claimants facing such changes do not receive any additional payments. There is therefore the issue of **how those households receiving Council Tax Reduction pay their Council Tax;**
- **% of Economically Active People (working age)**

	Leicester		EM	GB
Jan-Dec 04	131,900	69.3%	76.7%	76.3%
Jan-Dec 05	136,200	69.7%	77.5%	76.4%
Jan-Dec 06	148,500	74.1%	78.3%	76.7%
Jan-Dec 07	150,700	73.7%	77.5%	76.5%
Jan-Dec 08	145,900	71.4%	78.2%	76.7%
Jan-Dec 09	146,500	70.6%	77.9%	76.7%
Jan-Dec 10	146,500	70.1%	76.5%	76.2%
Jan-Dec 11	148,400	70.7%	77.3%	76.3%
Jan-Dec 12	153,000	72.8%	77.7%	76.9%
Jan-Dec 13	155,300	73.2%	77.5%	77.4%

EM East Midlands GB Great Britain

Source: Nomisweb.co.uk, Nomis labour market statistics

Table 3:% of economically active people (working age)

- All of the households affected by the changes will be low income households. This is an inevitable impact of Government changes to national welfare systems. As a consequence there may be **issues of debt management, and how households avoid further debt burdens or additional costs through non-payment;**
- When Council Tax which becomes due under the Council's scheme is not paid, the Council is still obliged to collect and recover that tax. **The impacts of those enforcement measures may be disproportionately felt by people in the claims population with disabilities, people with responsibility for young children, and women.** This observation arises as a simple consequence of the fact that the claims

population has higher numbers of people within it who face the greatest barriers to work. It is contended that, for different reasons, people with disabilities, people with responsibility for young children, and people who may struggle with English all face greater barriers to work;

- Some households have fallen out of entitlement to Council Tax Reduction as a result of the changes, **and as a consequence also fail to receive other benefits which are payable to households receiving help with Council Tax Payments.** This includes entitlement to free school meals, assistance with the cost of dental care and other support systems available to those in receipt of Benefits;
- The Government's reforms intend that people in work should always be better off than people in receipt of welfare. There is a presumption that, over time, greater numbers of working age claimants who are workless will enter the paid employment workplace. However it is suggested that when the UK begins to exit the recession, the recovery will most likely be centred on London and the South East. Additionally Council research confirms that the Council's population has a relatively low reading age and low numerical competency. **The location of the recovery is most likely to be centred on London, and the nature of jobs which are created may not be accessible to the Council's residents, both by location and by the type of work;**
- While, therefore, some parts of the UK may receive local economic benefits from the national recovery from the recession, most likely located in London and the South East, Leicester is less likely to do so. As a consequence, the expansion of the number of local jobs will be more dependent on local co-ordinated efforts to stimulate regeneration and economic development.

3.4 The Impacts by Options within the proposed Scheme

At section 2.5 above, the actual scheme is summarised and there are, in total; 9 variable elements to the scheme. Within the following table we describe the actual impacts of the different elements of the scheme.

Element of the Local Scheme	Actual Claims Affected	Impact of option	Equality Implication for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected by Household:
1: 80% Maximum amount of CTR	26,077	Increased amounts of CT due	Debt management within household; How to pay.	Gender Male 9,192 Female 12,754 Not Known 4,131 Disability 1,381 Children 13,700 Race Asian 3,006 Black 1,522 Chinese 18 White 7,812 Mixed heritage 420 Other 520 Not Known 12,779
2: Band B Cap applies to the claim award	1,871	Increased amounts of CT due	Band Cap may impact upon larger households whose needs require larger properties. They may live in properties above Band B.	Gender Male 627 Female 912 Not Known 332 Disability 143 Children 1251 Race Asian 335 Black 121 Chinese 1 White 282

Element of the Local Scheme	Actual Claims Affected	Impact of option	Equality Implication for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected by Household:
				Mixed heritage 17 Other 34 Not Known 1081
3: Capital Limit £6,000	95	If rule applies, no award will be payable.	Savings are depleted	Gender Male 37 Female 27 Not Known 36 Disability 0 Children 41 Race Asian 16 Black 3 Chinese 0 White 21 Mixed heritage 0 Other 0 Not Known 55
4. Remove Second Adult Rebate	Unable to identify household therefore analysis is unavailable.		None identified	Unable to identify household therefore analysis is unavailable.
5. Remove backdating	Unable to identify household therefore analysis is unavailable.		It may be argued that people with no familiarity with UK benefits systems are more likely to require backdating	Unable to identify household therefore analysis is unavailable.

Element of the Local Scheme	Actual Claims Affected	Impact of option	Equality Implication for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected by Household:
6. Minimum award	599		Non identified	Gender Male 156 Female 309 Not Known 134 Disability 38 Children 475 Race Asian 91 Black 37 Chinese 1 White 154 Mixed heritage 9 Other 14 Not Known 293
7. Retain disability premiums from Council Tax Benefit legislation.	1525	Reduced amounts of CT due	None identified	Gender Male 658 Female 674 Not Known 193 Children 656 Race Asian 192 Black 61 Chinese 1 White 489 Mixed heritage 17

Element of the Local Scheme	Actual Claims Affected	Impact of option	Equality Implication for consideration	Protected Characteristic of those affected by Household:
				Other 26 Not Known 739
8. Retain disregard of child care income.	249	Reduced amounts of CT due	None identified	Gender Male 5 Female 235 Not Known 9 Disability 11 Children 249 Race Asian 13 Black 44 Chinese 0 White 69 Mixed heritage 6 Other 5 Not Known 112
9. Retain disregard of War Widows pensions.	24	Reduced amounts of CT due	None identified	Gender Male 7 Female 17 Disability 11 Children 1 Race White 17 Not Known 7

Table 4: Impacts of options within the scheme

3.5 Adverse impacts and mitigating actions

Within the defined scope of the Council Tax Scheme there are no mitigating actions that can be taken that would reduce or remove the adverse equality impacts identified above. However, there were actions that the Council and its partners could take to mitigate the extent of equality impacts predicted as a result of the implementation of the Council Tax Scheme. These are explored in greater detail in section 6 of the report.

3.6 Financial Implications

Since April 2013, with the introduction of the Government welfare reforms, the Council has been required to introduce a Council Tax Reduction scheme (CTRS). This has resulted in low income taxpayers being required to contribute to their Council Tax for the first time. Prior to April 2013, under the Council Tax Benefit arrangements, the lowest income households identified by a statutory means test were entitled to a maximum of 100% benefit award against the Council Tax liability. In practice, this was reimbursed by Department for Works and Pensions (DWP).

Therefore, for the first time, in the financial year 2013/14, the Council received a Council Tax Reduction grant which included a 10% cut at national level. DWP reimbursement has ceased. The new grant was also cash limited (did not vary if claimant numbers increase). This reduction imposed by the Government was significant. If the Council chose not to pass the cost of the cut to claimants, then money had to be found from other Council resources which are already cash strapped. In 2013/14 this grant was paid as part of our Revenue Support Grant (RSG), but as a separately identified component.

Since 2014/15, this grant is no longer visible as a separate financial envelope. Table 5 below shows how “settlement funding assessment” (SFA), which is used to calculate RSG has been substantially reduced since 2013/14.

	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	Cuts 13/14 to 15/16
Settlement Funding Assessment	221.6	198.9	169.7	23.4%

Table 5: Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)

Therefore, by implication, the Council Tax Reduction grant has been reduced in line with the reduction in SFA and is therefore now much more than the 10% figure originally quoted by government.

Based on the above SFA funding proportions and the Council Tax Reduction grant within it, the table below calculates the potential Council Tax Reduction grant the council is receiving in 2014/15 and beyond.

Settlement Year	Notional Leicester City CTRS Funding £m
2013/14	22.7 (separately identified in the RSG)
2014/15	20.4
2015/16	17.4
Notional reduction in Council Tax Reduction Scheme funding since 2013/14	5.3

Table 6: Notional CTR Grant in proportion to SFA settlement

(Please note that in the above notional calculation, the 2013/14 figure already reflects the 10% cut that has already been made).

Table 6 shows a notional reduction of £5.3m for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme since 2013/14 on top of the cut made in that year. The Government disputes this interpretation, and claims that Council Tax support has been protected. If this were so, the residual impact on other services is a bigger cut than Government has claimed. Nonetheless, the cost of the Council Tax support grant now has to be met from an ever reducing amount of Revenue Support Grant, as if it were any other Council service.

For 2014/15 we are currently projecting a total spend (as a billing authority) on the scheme of £25.3m. Our share of the CTRS is estimated to be £21.4m. Based on the notional grant that we receive for this, it leaves the Council with a shortfall of £1m for 2014/15.

3.7 Interim Conclusions

The interim conclusions from the Impact Analysis of the proposed Local Scheme may be summarised as follows:

- The Government's policy to "Localise" decision making in local welfare relief on Council Tax was made at the same time as a cut in funding. As a direct consequence of the Government's decision to protect Pensioners from the impact of change, the cost of the change is borne entirely by the Working Age part of the claim population;
- As a consequence of the way that the UK welfare systems have operated in the past, the profile of people who received Council Tax Benefits contained higher numbers of households in which there is no work, or in which there is low income;
- People facing the greatest barriers to work are represented in higher numbers in the claims population. That includes people with disabilities; women, people with responsibility for young children (predominantly lone parents) and people who may struggle with English;
- It may therefore be argued that the implication of the scheme may be borne disproportionately by these groups, simply as a product of their higher representation within the claims population;
- Under the Council's scheme, all Working Age households receiving Council Tax Benefit and transferring to Council Tax Reduction will be required to pay towards their Council Tax. It is likely that all households, whether those over represented in the claim population or not, will face similar impacts;

- Those impacts include how the discount will be paid, the risks of indebtedness and dealing with debt, the impacts of enforcement action taken for unpaid tax and the extent to which it will be harder for people in Leicester to get back into work than it may be for people in other cities or in London;
- Nonetheless, the Council is obliged to determine whether a Local Scheme for Council Tax Reduction is fair and equitable. Irrespective of the direct consequence of the financial determination which has been made by the DCLG, i.e. their decision to cut funding available for awards of Council Tax Reduction by at least 10%.

4 The Local Scheme: Trend Analysis and Context

4.1 Summary of section

This section brings together the analysis which is designed to demonstrate the predicted and actual impacts of the local scheme for Council Tax Reduction. The Council's research is designed to blend local sources of research and information with where appropriate, the use of nationally published statistics which support key trend analysis.

4.2 Overall Approach to Impact Analysis

The overall approach which has been taken to the analysis is summarised as follows:

- At para 4.3 the Council summarises the overall claim profile, with reference to ethnic background of the household;
- At para 4.4 the Council explains the overall trend analysis of Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Reduction costs, with reference to datasets made available by the DWP and DCLG;
- At para 4.5 the Council summarises key trends which can be derived from the Office of National Statistics Census;
- At para 4.6 the Council demonstrates key trends within the Council's property database, and with reference to published national datasets by the DCLG;
- At para 4.7 the Council profiles the weekly costs for households under the scheme; and
- At para 4.8 the Council explains the overall conclusions which may be drawn.

4.3 Ethnic background of Claims

The following tables demonstrate the breakdown of the claims caseload by the ethnic background. Please note that the Benefits Service have been capturing information to record ethnic background for some years now, but that response rates are still incomplete, with information held for just over 46% of the overall claims database.

The City Council holds discretionary information with Revenues and Benefits records and which enables a summary of the ethnic background of all claimants, and separately of Working Age claimants. That data is summarised within the two tables below.

Of the total claims database of just over 43,000 claimants, just fewer than 20,000 households have made a statement of their ethnic background.

Ethnic Background, All Claimants

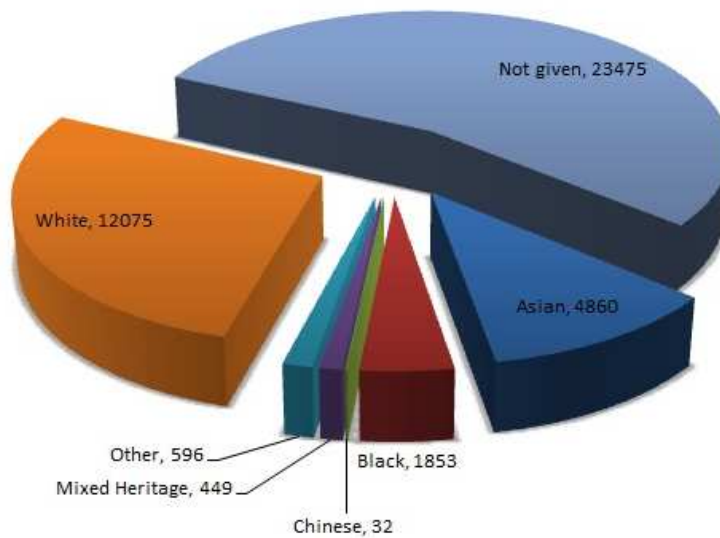


Figure 2: Ethnic Background of Claimants, All claimants

Ethnic Background, Working Age

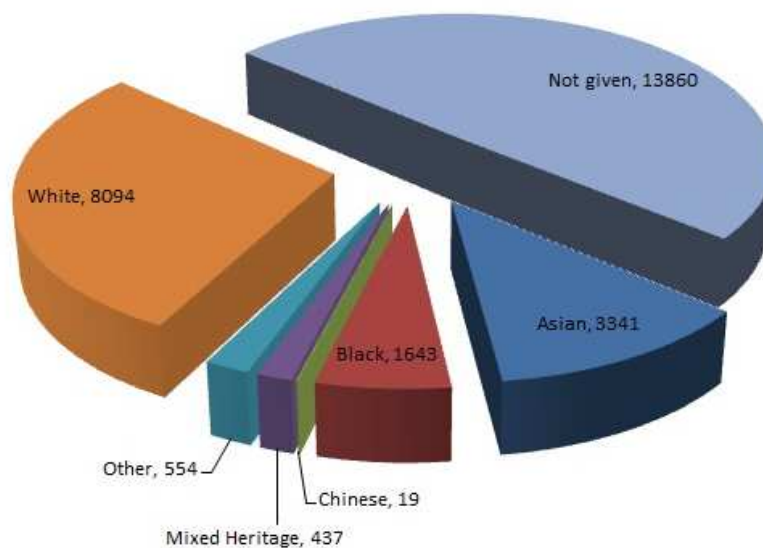


Figure 3: Ethnic background of Working Age Claimants

4.4 Increase in claims, All England and Leicester

Government statistics demonstrate that the national value of awards under Council Tax Benefit has been increasing. Between 1997 and 2011, the total value of awards for Council Tax Benefit more than doubled from £2,014 to £4,299m. Within the following table, and using the Government's data, we summarise the growth in national claims and Leicester since 2005⁴. It must be stressed that the figures provided by the DWP and DCLG summarise simply the overall increase in Council Tax Benefit payments, which includes increases both in claimant numbers as well as the increasing cost of Council Tax.

⁴ DWP Research published May 2012 by DCLG within "Council Tax Reduction Funding Consultation"

	England ⁵		Leicester ⁶	
	£m	%	£m	%
2005-06	3,230	6	25.1	0
2006-07	3,385	5	26.7	6.4
2007-08	3,471	3	27.1	1.5
2008-09	3,672	6	29.3	8.1
2009-10	4,095	12	32.6	11.3
2010-11	4,299	5	34.6	6.1
2011-12	4,291	-0.01	35.0	1.2
2012-13	4,290	0	36.9	5.4
Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes replace Council Tax Benefit from 1/4/13				
2013-14			25.6	-30.9%

Table 7: Overall Council Tax Benefit Spend, England and Leicester

Conclusions:

- While DWP projections claim that the value of awards paid for Council Tax will fall from 2013, the national trend since 1997 has been that the value of awards has increased;
- Following the introduction of Council Tax Reduction Scheme awards in Leicester City have seen a reduction in spend compared to 12/13 Council Tax Benefit awards of £11.4m (30.9%).

4.5 Population profile

The approach for local support of Council Tax from April 2013 required new approaches to financial planning and forecasting because of key changes that the Government have made. One of the key elements which Councils considered was the make-up of the local population, and with regard to factors including the balance between the working and pensioner populations of claimants.

Fully understanding the likely developments in the population profile now matters very much to the Council because, under CTR proposals, pensioner claims groups will be fully protected from the cost of change; and increases in claims which the Council will receive may not be funded by the Government for at least two years.

The following data tables begin to describe the population analysis of the City Council.

The following table explains the Council's overall distribution of claimants between pensioner and working age, based on all successful claims⁵ made throughout the year⁷.

⁵ Data from HMG budget tables. 2013/14 data not currently available.

⁶ 2005-2012 figures from annual subsidy return. 2013/14 figure from end of year out-turn report

⁷ Leicester City Council, Council Tax Benefit records, 2011/12

Age range	No.	Percentage	Value
Pension Age	15,392	35.5%	£11,531,502
Working Age	27,948	64.5%	£14,045,980
Total	43,340	100%	£25,577.482

Table 8: Working age and pensioner analysis 2013/14 CTR caseload

The “Split” of claims between the working and pensioner age claimants now matters to the Council. While the cut in grant is applied to the **whole cost** of the awards for Council Tax Reduction, under Government rules, pensioner claimants will receive full protection from the cost of change, and will continue to receive a maximum award of 100%.

The cost of the cut is therefore disproportionately borne by the working age population and a greater impact upon our finances due to the caseload for CTR increasing within the working age category. The Council anticipates this trend will remain.

The following table is derived from the Office of National Statistics Census data⁸. The table demonstrates the overall age profile of the population. The three East Midlands cities are shown alongside the regional level summaries which can be derived from the data.

	0-19		20-64		65+		Total
Derby	64300	25.85%	146800	59.03%	37700	15.16%	248700
Leicester	89800	27.22%	203000	61.53%	37200	11.28%	329900
Nottingham	79400	25.97%	190700	62.38%	35600	11.65%	305700
East Midlands	1078200	23.78%	2682100	59.17%	773000	17.05%	4533200
England & Wales	13430600	23.95%	33422400	59.60%	9223000	16.45%	56075900

Table 9: Population age profile

The following table draws upon the high level population changes which can be drawn by comparing the 2011 census with the data from 2001.

	Census Total			
	2001	2011	Growth	%
Derby UA	230700	248700	18000	7.80%
Leicester UA	282800	329900	47100	16.65%
Nottingham UA	268900	305700	36800	13.69%
England & Wales	52360000	56075900	3715900	7.10%

Table 10: Overall change, 2001-2011

⁸ Census 2011

Conclusions:

- While the average rate of increase in population for the whole of England and Wales is just over 7%, the rate of increase in Leicester is much higher at over 16%;
- While this represents the actual rate of growth over the last ten years, the Council's Research and Intelligence Team have now completed an initial analysis of recently released ONS data and which enables forecasting for the demographic profile over the next ten years. That prediction is shown at figure 4 below.
- Working age CTR claimants will increase over the coming years. Claim increase was estimated at 1% based on the previous two years' claim growth. This trend did not continue; the average number of claims during 2013/14 decreased by 7.8%

Year	Average caseload in period	% Change
2010/11	39,397	
2011/12	39,805	+1.03%
2012/13	40,262	+1.14%
2013/14	37,123	-7.8%

Table 11: Average caseload 2010-2013

The following table, drawn from the ONS census, shows age distribution in three broad blocks, separating working age from pensionable age and separately showing young people under 20.

	0-19		20-64		65+	
Derby	64300	25.85%	146800	59.03%	37700	15.16%
Leicester	89800	27.22%	203000	61.53%	37200	11.28%
Nottingham	79400	25.97%	190700	62.38%	35600	11.65%
top 25	2617000	25.22%	6318600	62.15%	1363700	12.63%
England	13430600	23.95%	33422400	59.60%	9223000	16.45%

Table 12: Comparison of other similar cities, young people

Conclusions:

- The population distribution is more similar to the "top 25" peer group than to some other comparisons;
- Within the top 25 losers, Leicester is among only 5 authorities in that group with more than 27% of the population aged 0-19 (Enfield, Newham, Birmingham, and Bradford are the other Authorities);
- It might be argued that those Councils with higher numbers of young people entering the job market face greater risks of increases in claims, as young people face higher rates of unemployment at the current time.
- Leicester has not only a comparatively large cost of Council Tax Benefits/Support, but also an increased percentage of young people under 20. Therefore unless this group attain work this increasing cohort of young individuals will continue to be a financial burden to the city's finances.

The Council has also now completed an initial assessment of the projections which may be inferred from the ONS release of further data during September 2011, and which supports more accurate forecasting.

It is stressed that the analysis below represents the initial analysis which has been completed by the Council’s Research and Intelligence Team. Further analysis may be completed, and therefore forecasts updated as necessary. As at August 2014, no more recent collated data is available.

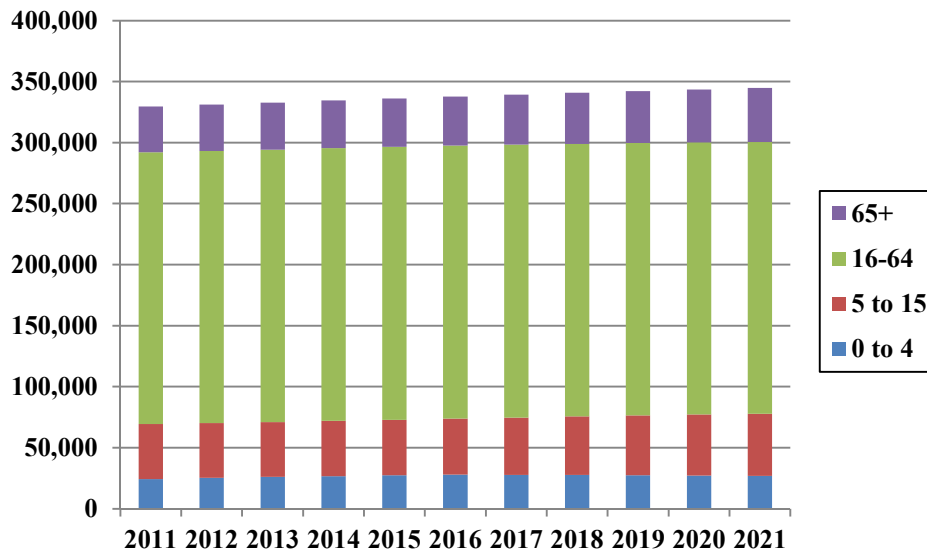


Figure 4: Population growth, ten year forecast

Conclusions:

- The construction of the age ranges available within the census data mean that assumptions have to be made in order to enable analysis to help with the forecasting of Council Tax Reduction;
- In particular, the construction of Council Tax Reduction produces a priority to understand the balance between the working age and pensioner population. Within the above table, the fit to “working Age” assumes a start at 16.
- Significantly, for the profiling of Council Tax Reduction, the Council’s projected balance between working age and pensioners is forecast to change over the next ten years;
- It is forecast that, over the ten year period, the working age population reduces from 67.4% of the population to 64.6; while pensioners increase from 11.3% to 12.8%;
- Council Tax Reduction protects pensioners from the cost of change, and places the cost of change on the Working Age claimants. If the Council Tax Reduction continues in the current form, and the population forecasts are accurate, then the burden of the cut on the working age population will increase in relative terms;
- The Council may wish to carefully monitor the profile of rising pensioner caseload, as one of the key costs of the new scheme over which the Council will have no control, i.e. that pensioner claims will continue to receive a maximum entitlement of 100%.

4.6 Council Tax Band distribution

The tables in this section have been profiled from the statistics published by the HMRC Valuation Office Agency (VOA), together with the DCLG. The VOA have previously published the data tables in full, enabling a complete analysis of Council Tax bands at both national level, and with analysis possible down to individual Billing Authority. Under current policy, national and regional

statistics are no longer published, making comparisons more difficult. The following table shows the percentage distribution at March 2012 and March 2014⁹.

Percentage of properties by Council Tax Band									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Derby UA	51.79%	19.06%	14.89%	7.64%	3.93%	2.05%	0.59%	0.05%	100%
Leicester UA	59.69%	19.41%	11.78%	5.09%	2.42%	1.10%	0.47%	0.05%	100%
Nottingham UA	64.38%	16.08%	11.59%	4.88%	1.73%	0.75%	0.53%	0.08%	100%
England	24.81%	19.61%	21.76%	15.31%	9.44%	4.98%	3.50%	0.57%	100%
East Midlands	37.64%	22.49%	17.98%	10.67%	6.29%	3.05%	1.73%	0.15%	100%
"Top 25" Losers	27.50%	20.22%	21.97%	15.04%	8.55%	3.88%	2.49%	0.36%	100%

Percentage of properties by Council Tax Band									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Derby UA	51.73%	19.08%	14.95%	7.64%	3.94%	2.05%	0.58%	0.04%	100.00%
Leicester UA	59.87%	19.40%	11.67%	5.08%	2.39%	1.10%	0.46%	0.04%	100.00%
Nottingham UA	63.88%	16.46%	11.67%	4.91%	1.73%	0.75%	0.52%	0.08%	100.00%
England									
East Midlands									
"Top 25" Losers									

Table 13: Summary of Council Tax Bands March 2012 and March 2014

Conclusions:

- The property databases of the East Midlands cities are skewed very heavily to Bands A and B. If all the properties within bands A and B are totalled, then Leicester and Nottingham have very similar levels of properties within these two bands, with Nottingham at 80.34% and Leicester at 79.27%.
- Council Tax valuation bands are based upon capital value at April 1991. As a direct consequence the distribution of bands varies nationally, and generally speaking property bands in London and the South East are higher than in the cities of the midlands and the north.

The following table shows the rate of increase which has been shown in Council Tax properties between 2008 and 2012. Further analysis to demonstrate the rate of change over a longer period is not possible because the VOA/DCLG no longer publish the full data-tables which enables both high level analysis and also down to the level of individual Billing Authority.

	Change in CT Properties			
	2008	01/04/2014	Change	%
England	22,506,624	23,236,000 ¹⁰	729,376	3.24%
Derby	104,437	107,602	3,165	3.03%
Leicester	123,985	131,206	7,221	5.82%
Nottingham	129,791	13,3609	3,818	2.94%

Table 14: Increase in Council Tax Properties, 2008-2012

Conclusions:

- Leicester's rate of increase in properties is above the national average, and there is an extent to which this increase has similarities with the increase in population which has also been found from ONS data above, although not at the same rate;

⁹ Department of Communities and Local Government, March 2012 Council Tax Bands

¹⁰ Dwelling stock estimates in England: 2014 – DWP

4.7 Weekly impact of the scheme

The scheme has been successfully adopted; the Council began the collection and enforcement stages to recover amounts of Council Tax due from households under the scheme. To assist with an analysis of the financial impact of the scheme for 2013/14, the following table demonstrates the weekly equivalent payment which households paying the minimum 20% charge have been required to make¹¹.

Band	Tax 13/14	Max Reduction	Due	per week
A, DPR	824.39	659.51	164.88	3.16
A	989.27	791.42	197.85	3.79
B	1154.15	923.32	230.83	4.43
C	1319.02	923.32	395.70	7.59
D	1483.90	923.32	560.58	10.75
E	1813.66	923.32	890.34	17.08
F	2143.42	923.32	1220.10	23.40
G	2473.17	923.32	1549.85	29.72
H	2967.81	923.32	2044.49	39.21

Table 15: Weekly payments, maximum CT reduction

Conclusions:

- The weekly financial impact of the 80% maximum amount together with the Band B limit produces an increasing financial impact upon those households in occupying accommodation above Band B. While there may well be only 20% of the property database above Band B in the City, the financial impacts upon those households is disproportionate; 1,871 households were affected by this rule in 2013/14.
- Some households affected may be homeowners, and in those cases the Council Tax collection rules provide for the application of a charging order for unpaid tax. However those provisions cannot apply to households who are renting properties.

4.8 Overall Conclusions

The overall findings from the impact assessment are summarised:

- The Council's analysis does not suggest that the changes within the local CTR scheme have or will continue to impact upon any group for whom the Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act disproportionately, other than the natural distribution of those groups within the existing claims caseload;
- The claims caseload contains a greater incidence of people facing greater barriers to escape worklessness. In the City, the Council's research concludes that key groups which are affected in this way include people with disabilities; people with responsibility for young children with particular impact on lone parents; of people from ethnic minority backgrounds, particularly in which the migration to this country is relatively recent;
- The changes to the claims caseload which are possible over coming years must now be carefully managed and tracked to enable effective financial planning and control, as the old "demand led" nature of Council Tax Benefit grant payment is replaced;

¹¹ Source: Leicester City Council

- The Council's claim caseload in the first year of management has demonstrated a change in claim behaviour driven by claim administration. Council Tax reduction claim assessment is linked to the processing of Housing Benefit; therefore there is no change at this juncture on cost of administration. However the claim application route has split and this has had a significant impact on claimants and subsequently collection. This is primarily driven by DWP because Council Tax Reduction no longer forms part of the claim route for DWP benefits including Housing Benefit. Therefore the CTR application route is now fractured and this can delay recovery in some cases. However the service has recognised this and put in place mechanisms to address the issue.
- The staff costs for administering the Council Tax Reduction only are £1.944m per year and the staff costs for the Housing Benefit element are £2.024m i.e. roughly a 50/50 split in costs between HB & CTR.
- The staff costs for administering Council Tax are £1.294m excluding Council Tax Reduction.

5 Vulnerability

5.1 Overview

This section discusses a critical new element of the scheme. The Government has decided that some households will be protected from the impact of the overall cut in Council Tax Benefits, and the term “vulnerable groups” has been introduced to describe claim groups which will be protected, in whole or in part, from any increased liability for Council Tax as a result of the changes.

Some vulnerable groups will be specified by the DCLG, while the Council must also consider other groups which should receive protection from the changes. Currently only pensioner households are exempted by regulations, with decisions about other groups left to Councils. However, the Council must also consider the greater the concessions made to vulnerable groups, the greater the corresponding impact on the remaining working age claim population.

5.2 Overall Equality Requirements

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required by law to “have due regard” to the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between protected groups and others;
- c) Foster good relations between protected groups and others.

Advancing equality of opportunity includes removing and minimising disadvantage, meeting the needs of protected groups which are different to others (particularly the disabled) and encouragement to participate in public life.

Protected groups under the Equality Act are characterised by:

- Age (including children and young persons);
- Disability;
- Gender;
- Gender re-assignment;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief; and
- Sexual orientation.

The needs of pensioners under the Act have largely been addressed by legislation. The key protected group to whom the Council must “have regard” in designing the scheme is the disabled.

5.3 The Government position

The DCLG has made it clear that pensioner claim groups will continue to be protected from the impact of the cut in CTR. The definition of “pensioner” is such that it will apply to all pensioner claim households, whether at pensionable age now, or achieving that age later on within the scheme. Such protection is in full, i.e. that pensioner households will continue to receive a maximum of 100% relief, in those cases in which the household qualifies for maximum support.

The Council has no discretion over this protection, and therefore the Council has made ongoing provision for the cost of pensioner benefit/support payments at 100%, notwithstanding DCLG grant payments at a lower rate. The initial indications from the DCLG suggested a less than

generous assessment of this cost, and which is likely to have a progressively adverse impact as the population naturally ages, and lives longer.

In addition, the DCLG have suggested that the following groups of claimants should be considered by local authorities when determining which additional groups to classify as vulnerable:¹²

- Disabled households and claimants;
- Households identified as having risk of child poverty;
- Households falling within the “Armed Forces Covenant”, including those in receipt of War Widows allowances for example; and
- Households at risk of homelessness.

In addition to whatever national protection is stipulated by the DCLG, the Council will therefore be obliged to consider which working age claim groups will also receive full protection because of vulnerability.

5.4 Summary of options: Vulnerable Groups

Prior to the development of the scheme, the leading options for the adoption of “vulnerable groups” were considered.

For each group the Council’s estimate of the potential cost of benefit paid was estimated. Adopting the group as “vulnerable” means that the client group would be protected (fully or partially) from the impact of the saving in Council Tax Reduction.

While some information for profiling the cost and impact of changes below was held within Council systems (including for example the Council Tax Benefit records) other information was not so readily available. To ensure that the report gave the best information possible, it was necessary to cast a wider net, capturing data from a range of sources.

The following table summarises the groups which the Council identified for consideration as “vulnerable” and potentially protected from cuts. It shows the estimated cost of benefit paid to these groups in 2012/13, and the impact on the savings shown in section 3 above if any given group was exempted in full, e.g. if families on Income Support with children are exempted in full, the effect is to reduce the savings quoted for a change to the scheme by an estimated 13%.

These estimates are on the basis that the claim profile of each group is the same as the claim profile for all claimants. The impact of determining that more than one group is vulnerable cannot be assessed by adding figures (as some people will be in more than one group).

¹² DCLG 2012: Localising Support for Council Tax Vulnerable People, Key Local Authority Duties

<u>Vulnerable Group</u>	<u>2012/13 Estimated Benefit Cost £m</u>	<u>Impact on Reduction Measures</u>
Disability, depending on the extent of disability required to qualify	£1m - £3.7m	Up to 28%
Dependent children under 5 (parent or parents on income support)	£0.9m - £3.4m	13%
Other groups, including:- - care leavers - hostel leavers - claimants fleeing domestic violence - supported by Forced Marriage Unit - war widows - drug/alcohol dependent - foster carers - ex-offenders under MAPPA arrangements	£0.3m	2%
Those adversely affected by specific welfare reform proposals	£2m	See below

Table 16: Summary of Vulnerable People

5.5 Consultation and Policy Determinations

Following identification of the above ‘vulnerable groups,’ the Council consulted on whether vulnerable people should be protected under its CTR scheme and 73 per cent of respondents agreed they should be. The scheme retained key elements of the CTB scheme which allowed disregards from certain types of income relating to vulnerable groups within the calculation of awards, including but not limited to Child Benefit; Disability Living Allowance; Income Support and War Widows pensions/disablement benefits and by continuing the allowances within the calculation for carers and child care. This has provided a financial buffer from the full effects of the change. This protection has been allowed within costs of the scheme design.

In addition to this, the council reviewed the Council Tax Discretionary Relief policy to allow additional protection to the most severe impacts of these reforms on vulnerable persons who face exceptional financial hardship. The relief reduces the Council Tax payable after taking into account eligibility for any national benefits, discounts, reliefs and exemptions. This additional protection will be an assessed reduction which can be applied to an individual in exceptional circumstance. The Executive considered which individuals are included in the vulnerable category and approved a fund of £315,000 (with financial contributions from the precepting authorities Fire £11,559 and Police £37,650).

5.6 Identified Vulnerable Groups 2013/14 – Impacts & Actions

Within the above table, the summary terms used include the following client groups. More detailed analysis for each of the following client groups including the high level ward analysis of the distribution of customers is shown at appendix 2.

1. People with disability

The total maximum benefit cost of £4m included households in the following sub-groups, for which more recent data on number of claimants in Leicester are also provided:

<u>Disability benefit</u>	<u>2012/13 Estimated Benefit Cost</u>	<u>Number of claimants in Leicester (February 2014)</u>
Disability Living Allowance with a 'care' component at a 'higher' rate	£0.8m	2,690
Disability Living Allowance with a 'care' component at a 'middle' rate	£1.0m	3,870
A support component of Employment and Support Allowance	£0.5m	6,290
Carer's Allowance in payment	£0.2m	4,780

Impact

Each of the above four client groups receives a welfare benefit which is currently payable by the DWP in respect of households in which there is a disabled person who qualifies under the appropriate rules for that payment. In some cases the statutory test includes the completion of an assessment by an appointed qualified doctor. In all cases the assessment and qualification of the disabled person for the qualifying benefit is completed by the DWP, not the Council.

The above tests therefore give the Council a means by which households in which there is a disabled person present can be objectively assessed. In very general terms, a greater level of disability will be present in those households in which the higher care component is paid as opposed to the middle component.

The Council is required to consider the needs of disabled people within its proposed scheme. Under Government guidance, disabled people will face greater challenges to join the working population.

Actions

The Council considered that the following exceptions were considered to be an appropriate level of protection for disabled claimants of Council Tax Reduction, in line with similar allowances made under the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme:

- Awards of Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments, Carer's Allowance and Attendance Allowance were fully disregarded as income;
- Additional disability premiums allowed disregarding a set amount of non-qualifying income, dependant on whether the disability income allowed was considered moderate or severe, including the support element of Employment & Support Allowance;
- 'Passporting' of a maximum 80% reduction to recipients of Employment & Support Allowance (income-based);
- Non-dependant deductions for recipients of Disability Living Allowance with a 'care' element assessed as 'moderate' or 'higher' disallowed, to allow adults to live with and provide care for disabled claimants without penalty.

In addition to the above, claimants receiving disability income or caring for children with disabilities were also granted 'protected characteristic' status for the purposes of making assessments through the Council Tax Reduction Discretionary Relief fund. Where financial hardship could also be demonstrated, the difficulties experienced by households adversely affected by disability are reflected through the increased likelihood of a discretionary award.

Figure 5 below demonstrates the increased proportion of Council Tax Discretionary Relief offered 2013/14 (31.18%) in direct comparison to both the proportion of the existing Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction caseload (17.7%) and the general population of the Leicester area (7.89%), demonstrating that the intended objectives of the Discretionary Relief policy are being met.

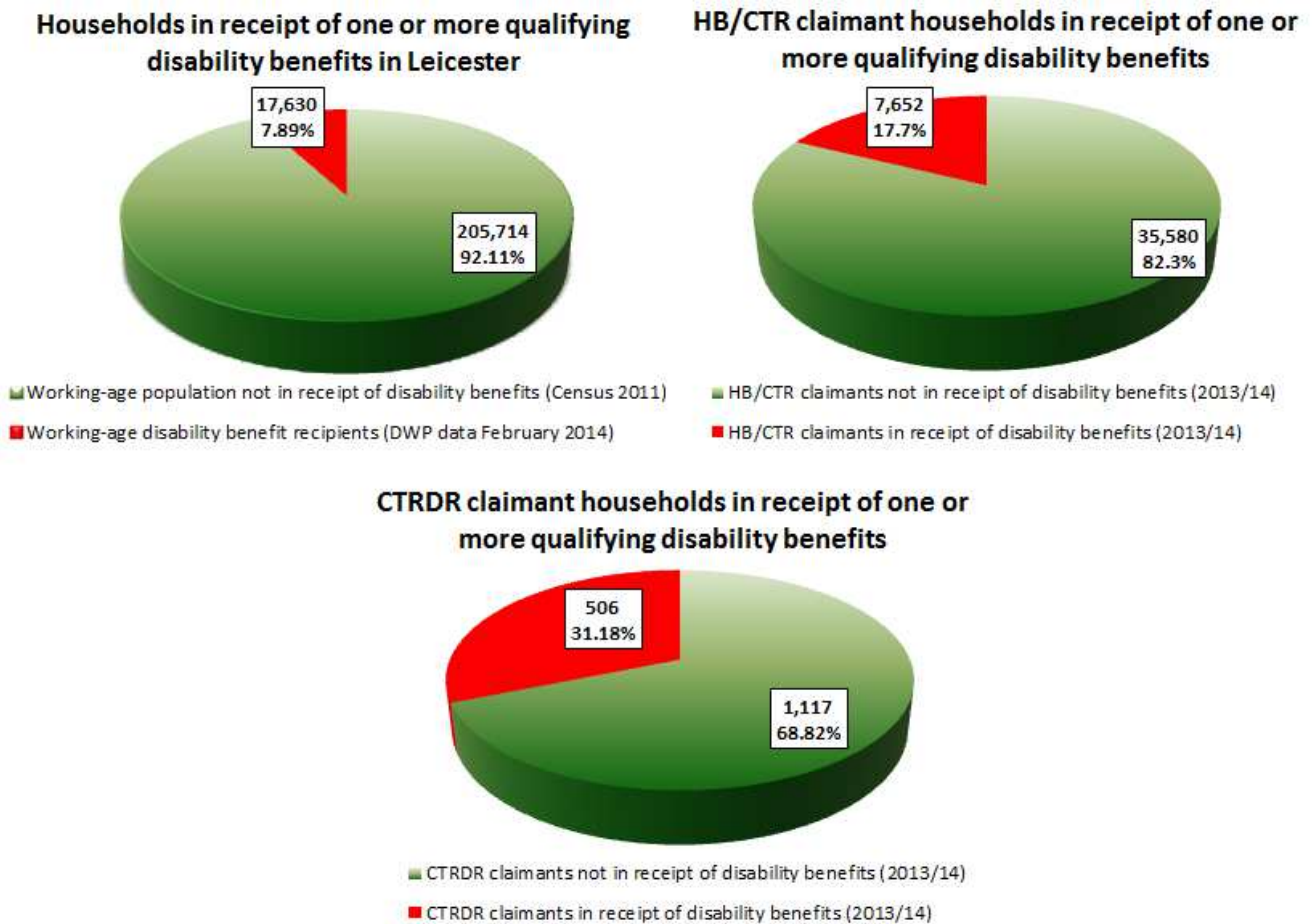


Figure 5: Disability assistance analysis

2. Households with responsibility for young children

The total maximum cost of £2.4m includes households in the following sub-groups, for which more recent data on number of claimants in Leicester are also provided:

<u>Disability benefit</u>	<u>2012/13 Estimated Benefit Cost</u>	<u>Number of claimants in Leicester (February 2014)</u>
Income Support payable for a single person with responsibility for children ¹³	£1.0m	3,550
Income Support payable for a couple with responsibility for children*	£0.35m	1,150

Impact

Again, the above potential client groups were identified using qualification for welfare benefits administered by the DWP. Coupled with an analysis of the Council's existing records, the above clients groups gave the Council, where known, details of low income households in which there is responsibility for looking after young children.

The Council considered the protection of some or all of these to be argued to be consistent with the Council's responsibilities to take steps to mitigate against child poverty. Conversely, restricting protection only to claimants in receipt of Income Support may have created a disincentive to find work.

Actions

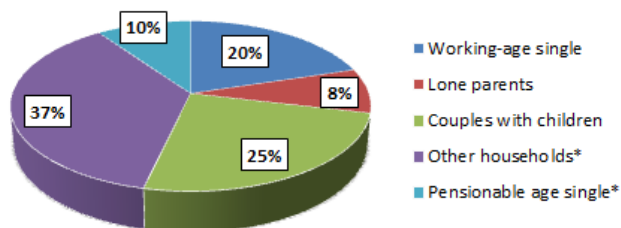
The Council considered that the following exceptions were considered to be an appropriate level of protection for parents with young children, in line with similar allowances made under the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme:

- Awards of Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance received for children and Carer's Allowance were fully disregarded as income;
- Increased allowances of income for claimants with dependent children, and additional premiums disregarding a further set amount of non-qualifying income where the claimant was a lone parent;
- Expenditure on childcare costs disregarded in full from non-qualifying income, and monies received for child maintenance also disregarded;
- 'Passporting' of a maximum 80% reduction to recipients of Income Support.

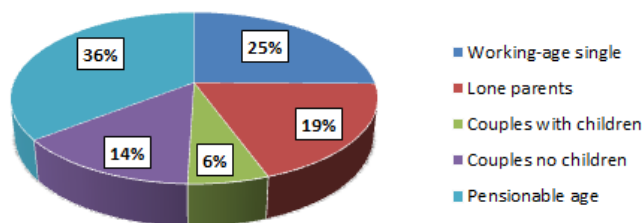
In addition to the above, claimants caring for young children were also awarded 'protected characteristic' status for the purposes of making assessments through the Council Tax Reduction Discretionary Relief fund, with pregnant mothers and lone parents given maximum priority. Where financial hardship could also be demonstrated, the difficulties experienced by households adversely affected by families with young children are reflected through the increased likelihood of a discretionary award for lone parents are demonstrated by Figure 6 below (21%) compared with both the Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction caseload (19%) and the general population (8%).

¹³ Of 6,040 Income Support claimants in Leicester, 3,080 have at least one child under 5

Household composition of Leicester's general population (Census 2011)



Household composition of Leicester's Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction awards (2013/14)



*Note - Census data did not distinguish between couples without children and pensionable age households with multiple occupants.

Household composition of Leicester's Council Tax Reduction Discretionary Relief awards (2013/14)

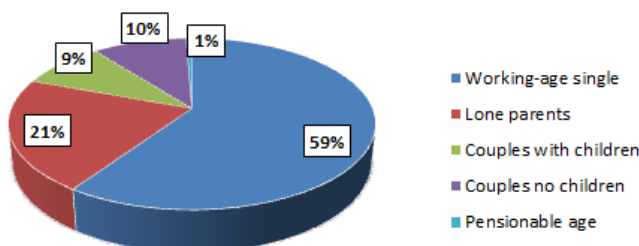


Figure 6: Household composition analysis

3. Protecting other groups

The above table summarises a short list of other potential groups which may be considered for protection, through vulnerability.

Impact

The total maximum cost of £0.3m is distributed throughout the group as follows:

- Care leavers (£7k);
- Hostel leavers (£10k);
- Claimants fleeing domestic violence (£56.5k);
- War widows allowances (£6k);
- Drug and alcohol dependency (109k);
- Foster carer allowances (£68k);
- Some ex-offenders (£7k).

Actions

It was considered that groups above may be considered under the Council's duties to take steps to mitigate against homelessness. A number of relevant exceptions in line with similar allowances made under the previous Council Tax Benefit scheme, for example the disregard of payments relating to foster carers were applied, and the disregard of allowances for war widows also meets the Council's responsibilities under the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Council also elected to ensure an appropriate level of protection for the above groups through the policy implemented for consideration of Council Tax Reduction discretionary relief.

The following are examples of prescribed circumstances qualifying as 'A' value protected characteristics:

- In care or is a carer;
- Care leaver up to the age of 22 or 25 and at university;
- Resettlement or enablement into the community;
- Suffering from domestic violence, sexual violence or trafficking;
- Ex-offender (MAPPA level 2/3);
- Pregnancy;
- New arrival or member of an emerging community.

The following are examples of prescribed circumstances qualifying as 'B' value protected characteristics:

- In foster care, a foster carer or adoption issues;
- Alcohol or substance misuse;
- English not first spoken language.

Whilst all of the above have formed an active role in the consideration of Discretionary Relief awards – and assessors are also asked to bear in mind all of their obligations under the Human Right Acts 1998 and Equalities Act 2010 when making their decisions – limitations in the record keeping of decisions made mean that only overriding 'risk' issues demonstrated in Figure 9 of Appendix 2 were routinely recorded.

The Council will endeavour to develop more sophisticated record-keeping in future to ensure that our obligations to protected 'vulnerable groups' are being met in all respects. Demographic analysis of gender and ethnicity are also provided in Appendix 2 – beyond the additional relief granted to those struggling with English outlined above, these were not considered factors giving rise to protected status as a 'vulnerable group.'

4. Welfare Transition

The total maximum cost of £2m shown includes households in which:

- Disability Living Allowance at a lower rate is paid (£1.1m); or
- Households are moving from Incapacity Benefit to ESA (£44k); or
- Households are expected to fall under the "Benefit Capping" arrangements (£0.34m); or
- Households who will lose or receive reduced benefit under reforms to working tax credit (£0.22m); or
- Households in which there is an adult aged over 50, and in which benefit is lost or reduced because of changes to working hours under new rules (£9k); or
- Payments for pregnant women who receive no SMP (£44K).

Impact

Each of the above client groups is a welfare benefit which is currently payable, but which is changing under the national welfare review. As a result of those changes which the Government has introduced, the above summary shows which groups identified may be worse off.

Actions

Whilst it may be appropriate to consider transitional cases, the Council also considered that it should avoid becoming responsible for a long term cost as a consequence of changes which had been nationally determined. It was felt appropriate therefore that protection as a result of welfare benefit transition should be considered on the basis of individual circumstances, and therefore taken into account under the Council Tax Reduction Discretionary Relief scheme.

5.7 Challenges to the adopted scheme

The changes to Council Tax Benefits from April 2013 are amongst the first to be implemented of the wider and very significant programme of welfare reform which the Government is implementing. It is no understatement that from April, the changes to welfare are the most significant which have been seen in at least 30 years.

There will consequently be a risk of legal challenge to any scheme that the Council adopts. The Council is extremely concerned about the implications if the Government does not recognise the impact that will be caused to the City Council, and its residents. Some of that concern may be expressed by claimants affected by the local scheme from April 2013, and choosing to challenge the impact of the scheme through the courts.

5.8 Conclusion

The effective determination of vulnerable groups which will receive protection from the savings imposed ensures that appropriate claim groups do not face the challenge of payment.

For those households which must fall within scope of payment, the Council has revised its approach to payment and collection which apply from April 2013 at section 6 below.

6 Mitigation

6.1 Update at April 2014- a year on through collection.

The policy for Local Council Tax Reduction did not plan to mitigate against any particular group with protected characteristics, but as we discuss at section 3, some groups may have greater representation within the claims population because of the barriers to work which are faced.

Where Council Tax due is not paid, the Council is obliged to take the necessary steps to collect it. Council Tax rules provide a robust framework which can be used to collect unpaid tax, which includes the issue of a court summons in order to apply for a liability order, and the subsequent right to apply for deductions from DWP benefits or earnings, or instruct Enforcement Agents.

The Council adopted a “softer” recovery approach for the client group most affected by the changes from April 2013, i.e. those receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit during 2012.

Leicester City Council has approximately 130,000 domestic properties. Due to changes of circumstances/addresses, the Revenues and Benefits Service will be actively collecting monies owed from approximately 149,000 accounts. Of these, 16,654 (11%) accounts were identified as receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit during a snapshot period in February 2013 and tracked to monitor recovery activity during 2013/14. This activity is continuing into the 2014/15 year.

In order to provide further assistance to these payers, additional non statutory reminders were issued before taking formal recovery action. These included a prompt before the first instalment was due, a third non statutory reminder (whereas normally only a maximum of two reminders would be issued) and a non-statutory final notice before a summons. At least two additional documents are being issued as well as the statutory documents in order to encourage payment and /or engagement with the Council.

6.2 Distribution of recovery activity

In support of the determination of effective approaches to the collection and recovery of tax due, the Council has completed a review of recovery activity by community area, and which breaks down the recovery of unpaid Council Tax to the individual communities within the wards of the City¹⁴.

Community	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Cases	Value of Debt	Cases	Value of Debt	Cases	Value of Debt
Abbey	71	£35,099	176	£84,4891	430	£116,393
Aylestone	77	£34,675	111	£38,859	306	£45,169
Aylestone Park	100	£43,032	221	£73,477	541	£98,730
Beaumont Leys	240	£114,038	316	£89,978	772	£131,724
Belgrave	101	£48,316	140	£48,692	360	£54,131
Braunstone East	136	£65,292	214	£68,954	546	£88,778
Braunstone West	166	£88,658	208	£62,747	544	£84,908
Castle Hill	115	£55,810	159	£46,850	396	£55,724
Charnwood	152	£74,331	189	£63,350	455	£70,523

¹⁴ All accounts with recovery [summons stage and beyond] O/S balance at 31st March 2014

Community	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Cases	Value of Debt	Cases	Value of Debt	Cases	Value of Debt
City Centre and St Andrews	278	£117,103	646	£266,506	1,674	£437,297
Clarendon Park	60	£24,562	197	£90,732	498	£99,460
Crown Hills	172	£82,404	177	£48,750	548	£74,672
Evington	41	£23,255	54	£25,612	164	£29,929
Eyres Monsell	153	£73,115	229	£67,268	573	£89,520
Hamilton	127	£71,566	209	£86,748	556	£124,564
Humberstone	72	£30,739	96	£31,613	310	£54,682
Latimer North	95	£46,474	86	£29,052	291	£47,674
Latimer South	75	£33,214	112	£37,882	286	£41,088
Mowmacre and Stocking Farm	256	£117,766	305	£94,107	847	£138,925
Netherhall and Thurnby Lodge	106	£49,416	149	£45,631	497	£65,413
New Parks East	177	£90,676	232	£62,486	720	£114,297
New Parks West	198	£102,280	227	£69,654	662	£105,424
Newfoundpool	165	£61,464	331	£127,487	824	£184,639
Northfields	141	£68,933	173	£47,980	557	£75,122
Rowley Fields	77	£29,342	213	£88,089	559	£142,103
Rushey Fields	76	£35,773	95	£36,988	256	£58,272
Rushey Mead	50	£24,355	94	£37,678	276	£61,447
Saffron	158	£75,811	207	£61,264	612	£97,642
South Knighton	19	£9,996	47	£22,046	145	£29,087
Spinney Hill	149	£77,420	225	£82,403	547	£101,879
St Matthews and St Peters	172	£81,915	169	£57,530	544	£82,011
St Saviours	79	£38,906	112	£36,007	295	£52,980
Stoneygate	124	£65,329	209	£79,492	535	£110,933
West End	193	£74,269	525	£218,889	1,197	£306,756
West Knighton	74	£39,195	135	£58,611	385	£81,125
Western Park	44	£16,777	99	£39,377	235	£47,432
Total	4,489	£2,121,303	7081	£2,527,278	18,943	£3,600,452

Table 17: Recovery action by Community, 2011/12 to 2013/14

Recovery action is ongoing for any charges not paid within the 2013/14 financial year. In the main the arrears will be collected by deductions from benefits. Payments by deductions from benefits have increased by 90% compared to the same period in 2012.

6.3 Collection Policy for the new payers in the scheme.

It is unlikely to be either desirable or practical for the standard systems of enforcement which apply to the overall Council Tax debt population to be universally applied to the new CTR liability client group. However, it is also the case that some households, who already are used to paying Council Tax at low levels, must be supported to continue paying.

The standard systems can produce a Liability Order and consequent costs swiftly, and if no further response is received the routine next step would be the instruction of the Enforcement Agents. It is likely that the use of the Enforcement Agents should be applied only where considered appropriate in this population, rather than as a default response.

The approach we took was a multi-faceted:

- Early in 2013 and throughout the year, the Revenues and Benefits Service ran a “Talk to Us” campaign. Every opportunity was used to publicise not only the change from Council Tax Benefit to the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme, but also the wider welfare reform changes. The emphasis was on anyone affected by the changes to come and talk to the Council. Consequently as soon as the bills were issued, a large number of payers engaged with the Council.
- Reviewed all our letters to reflect promotion of the talk to us campaign.
- The extension of payment options:
 - Direct Debit and other regular methods of payments were offered over 12 months should the party engage prior to 24th March 2013.
 - Where Direct Debit was a previous method of payment this option automatically refreshed for the new billing period.
 - Reviewed the Fair Debt Policy in November 2012. Where recovery action was deemed necessary, arrangements were made under the Council’s Fair Debt Collection Policy, reflecting the ability to pay against the requirement to collect the debt.
 - The completion of general policy statements about the way in which debt will be enforced, including the planned use of the Enforcement Agent, rather than as a default measure;
- Reduce indebtedness- Court costs were negotiated to a lower level of £40 as opposed to £67.50 where the debt owing was below £250. This benefited ALL charge payers.
- Additional non statutory reminders were built into the recovery process.
- Local enforcement policies are updated to include scenario based examples with reference to such protected characteristics, and designed to show what types of enforcement are, and are not acceptable.

6.4 Policy with regard to protected characteristics

We updated the local enforcement policies to include scenario based examples with reference to such protected characteristics, and designed to show what types of enforcement are, and are not acceptable. It is to be stressed that the use of scenarios in this way is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. The scenarios have been proposed to enable thinking to be developed about

approaches to recovery and enforcement of unpaid tax which may, and may not be appropriate in particular circumstances.

The Council employs two firms of enforcement agents who are required to follow an agreed Code of Conduct which ensures vulnerable persons are protected. The following categories and others are recognised within this Code of Conduct.

It should also be noted that from 6th April 2014, enforcement regulations were radically changed by the Government and it has now become a requirement that where vulnerability is identified, there is an obligation on the enforcement companies to provide additional assistance.

As part of the review of its enforcement policies, the Council has ensured that where it has been necessary to refer cases to enforcement agents, the action taken and enforcement costs incurred are restricted.

Examples of scenarios proposed for consideration include:

Protected Characteristic, and scenario summary	Scenarios which could be developed
Gender: Women within the claim population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions which are and are not acceptable for collection of tax from single women; • Identifying and managing recovery from vulnerable women or women who may be at risk of violence in the event of collection of tax due.
Gender: Pregnant women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-step collection from pregnant women, including actions to be taken to not place women under any additional stress.
Age: people with responsibility for young children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the bailiff may, and may not proceed, when there are children in the house who may not be old enough to understand what is going on; • How to proceed when a child or minor opens the door to a bailiff.
Disability: Disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which goods may be protected from distress under local policies, for example mobility scooters.
Race: Emergent Community who may struggle with English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure that a competent adult is present in the event of enforcement action.

Table 18: Draft scenarios for collection and enforcement policy

Of the 16,654 accounts identified as previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit in 2012/13, 41 progressed to Enforcement Agency activity by 31st March 2014.

What is this demographic profile?

Gender		Expectant mother	Lone Parent		Disabled		Race	
Female	27	No Data Available	Female	19	Disabled	3	Asian	1
Male	14		Male	0			Black	3
							White	19
							Not Known	18

Table 19: Demographic profile of former 100% benefit accounts with enforcement agency activity

6.5 Mitigation of indebtedness where enforcement is applied

Where recovery action was deemed necessary, the Council adjusted its policy based on the following known impacts:

- Analysis showed that almost 60% of households in Leicester are in band A and almost 20% are in band B. Therefore 80% of the charge payers sit within this lower band profile. This is also reflected within the Council Tax Reduction caseload profile where 93% of claimants lived in band A and band B properties.
- Consequently working age households receiving the maximum Council Tax Reduction would not see their Council Tax payments exceeding £250.00

Taking the above points into consideration, the Council set its liability order summons costs at two levels for all cases; at £40.00 for balances up to £250.00 and £67.50 for balances of £250.00 and above. The cost of administration to the Council for all debts is however the same. Both levels of costs were agreed with the Magistrates Court.

Attachment to Income Support, and similar

Where it has been necessary to take recovery action and obtain a liability order at the Magistrates Court, the first recovery option considered is the whether the Council Tax payer is receiving an attachable benefit. If so, an application is made to the DWP to make deductions from that benefit in order to clear the arrears. As at 31st March 2014:

- Of the 16,654 charge payers identified as previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit in 2012/13, 2,542 are being paid by deductions from their welfare benefit. There are a further 268 cases pending this attachment.
- Council records show that attachments to benefits overall had increased by 90%.

It should be noted, to recover the debt due for an average band B debt the attachment would need to be in place for a minimum of 75 weeks at a rate of £3.60 per week. Therefore this action should be undertaken promptly as this process although meeting the council recovery objective, impacts on the payer's available funds to clear future charges.

Compare this against the weekly payment regime of £4.44 should they pay their Council Tax weekly. They can save the additional cost of £40. Therefore by paying weekly, at an additional

84p per week they avoid the unnecessary upset of the recovery process of obtaining a liability order and subsequent delay in paying the debt over a protracted period.

Write-off policy and relationship with “Hardship”

The Council Tax Discount Discretionary Scheme aims to support local Council Tax payers experiencing financial hardship under section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003; this introduced a new power as Section 13A with the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This is awarded where it becomes apparent that the charge payer can demonstrate severe financial hardship, which cannot be fully covered by awarding Council Tax Reduction.

2013/14	Contribution (£)
Leicester City	265,791
Leicestershire Police Authority	37,650
Leicestershire Fire Authority	11,559
Total:	315,000

Table 20: Contributors to the discretionary fund

The discretionary fund remains available for the 2014/15 financial year. As at 31st March 2014, 1946 successful claims had been made against this fund with a total spend of £263,267.71. Where the details have been recorded, the successful claimants fall into the following groups:

2013/14 Council Tax Discretionary awards								
Claims Paid	Disability		Gender		Ethnicity		Household Status	
1,946	Disabled	504	Male	703	Asian	245	Single Pregnant	5
	Not	1103	Female	920	Black	147	Single under 25	41
(Details gathered in 1,623 cases)	Disabled	16			Chinese	1	Single 25-34	128
	Unknown				Mixed	64	Single over 35	792
					White	1011	Pensioner	10
					Unknown	155	Lone Parent	344
							Couple with Children	144
							Couple	159

Table 21: Demographic breakdown of successful claims for discretionary payments (some data not collected)

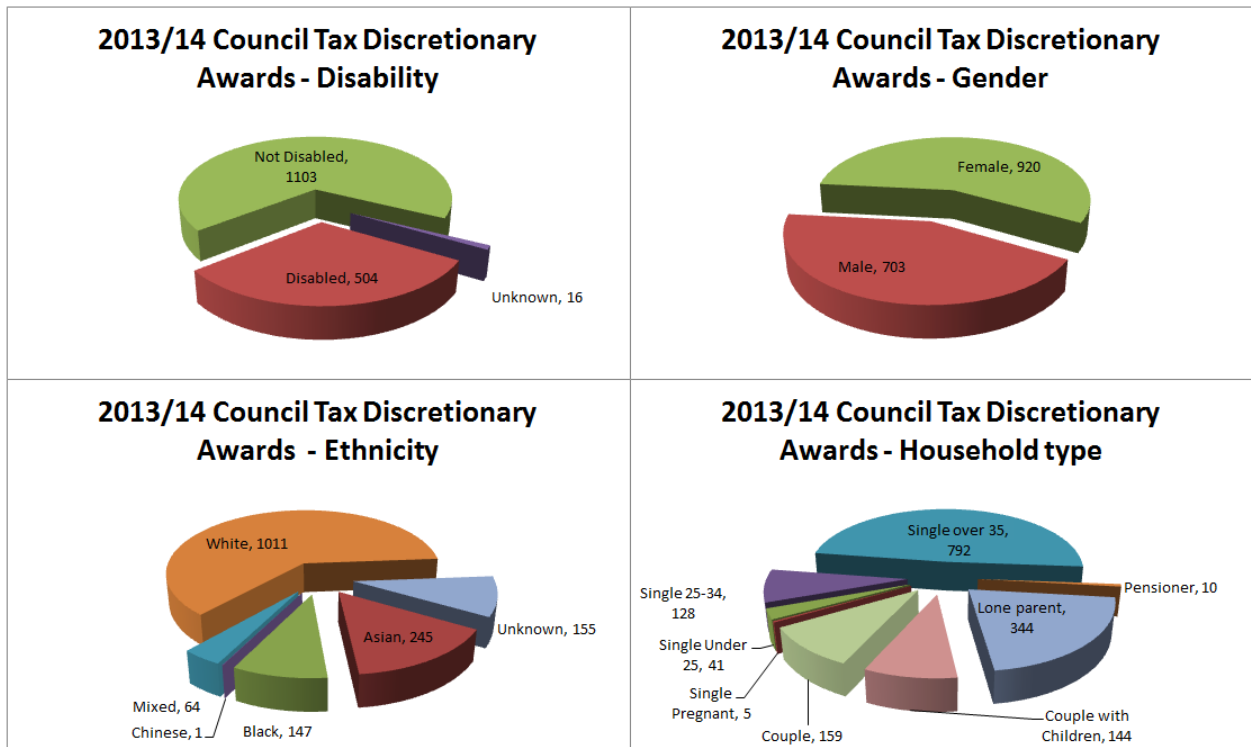


Figure 7: Demographic breakdown of successful claims for discretionary payments (some data not collected)

6.6 Analysis of Recovery Activity in 2013

Billing, collection and recovery of Council Tax is governed by the Administration and Enforcement Act 1992, statutory instrument 613 (1992) and associated regulations.

During the 2013/14 financial year, the collectable debt increased by £10.757m (12.28%) due to the reduced funding for Council Tax Reduction and other changes to empty property discounts and exemptions. There were over 16,000 more new payers who no longer received 100% Council Tax Benefit and who were required to pay at least 20%, and others whose entitlement was reduced to a lower rate.

The in-year collection rate was 94.81% for 2013/14, (95.97% in 2012/13). Although the in-year collection rate fell by 1.16%, the net collectable debit increased by £10.757m. This was due to the reduced funding from the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction scheme and the changes to empty property discounts and exemptions.

Overall the net cash collected increased by £9.185m (10.92%).

Collection Rate Comparison			
Quarter	2012/13	2013/14	Change
1	27.53%	27.18%	-0.35%
2	54.27%	53.41%	-0.86%
3	81.42%	79.56%	-1.86%
4	95.97%	94.81%	-1.16%

Table 22 – Collection rate Comparison

Methods of payment: of those previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit

- 45% of payers at 31st March 2014 were paying by direct debit.
- 54% of payers are non-direct debit payers and pay their Council Tax by a variety of methods including by cash using PayPoint/Post Office or internet/telephone banking.
- The remaining 1% pay by standing order.

In summary:

- There was an overall increase of over 43% in documents sent (this is 9% if the previously 100% Council Tax Benefit cases are excluded)
- Attachment of Earnings - amount received has increased by 5%
- Attachment of Benefits - amount received has increased by 90% (and will rise even further over 2014/15 to in excess of £0.5M)

The following tables show a comparison of recovery activity during 2013/14 compared to 2012/13

Previously 100% Council Tax Benefit cases	2013/14	2012/13
Document Type	No of Docs	No of Docs
1 st Reminders	12,165	0
2 nd Reminders	4,586	0
3 rd Reminders	2,166	0
Non statutory Final Notice	4097	0
Summons	7,086	0
Restricted bailiff action	41	0

Table 23: Comparison of recovery activity for former 100% benefit accounts

All other Council Tax	2013/14	2012/13	% Inc/Dec
Document Type	No of Docs	No of Docs	
Previous Year Final Notices	7,483	6,233	20.05%
Reminder 1	39,593	36,137	9.56%
Reminder 2	11,289	12,034	-6.19%
Final Notice	5,376	5,505	-2.34%
All Summons (excl welfare recovery cases)	21,430	18,390	16.53%
14D bail warning letter sent by bailiffs	9,611	8,399	14.43%
Bailiff Transfer (14D letter sent by Council)	1,608	1,232	30.52%
Small Balance Letters <£65.50	211	380	-44.47%
Committal Summonses	15	0	
Totals of all recovery cases	126,742	88,310	+43.52%
(Non-CTR cases Totals)	96,601	88,310	9.39%

Table 24: Comparison of recovery activity for all Council Tax accounts

Collection – Previously 100% Council Tax Benefit recovery cases

As at 31/3/14

- 9,501 of 16,654 cases have paid in full
- 2,542 cases paying by deductions from benefit (AIS) (268, cases pending AIS, i.e. waiting for one order to finish before starting deductions)
- 122 cases now paying by Attachment of Earnings
- 41 cases sent to Rossendales for restricted bailiff action – of these
 - 5 paid in full
 - 12 cases are in arrangement
 - 3 have been withdrawn as the payers have been identified as vulnerable
 - 1 payer has absconded
- The remaining 20 cases have been issued with further reminders.664 have not paid anything. These have had some recovery action but further analysis is required.

**Collection - Previously 100% Council Tax Benefit Cases
(as at 31/3/14)**

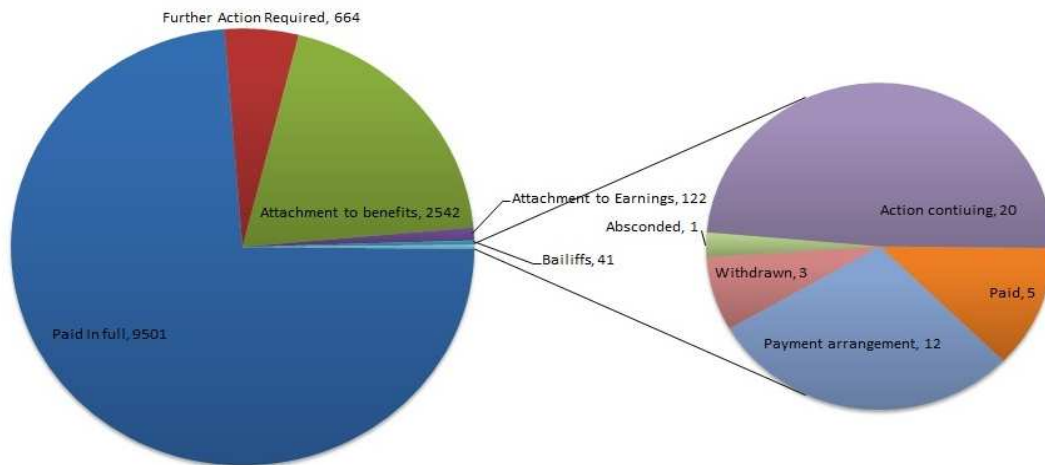


Figure 8: Collection – previously 100% benefit cases as at 31/3/14

In order to provide further assistance to these 16,654 payers previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit, additional non-statutory reminders were issued before taking formal recovery action. These included a prompt before the first instalment was due, a third non statutory reminder (whereas normally only a maximum of two reminders would be issued) and a non-statutory final notice before a summons. At least two additional documents are being issued as well as the statutory documents in order to encourage payment and /or engagement with the Council. In addition to this, options to pay through other means were offered. The detail is reflected in the figure below.

As a consequence:

- 9,414 are still on a separate pay group and will receive additional reminders if required;
- 2,185 payers are on direct debit method of payment;
- 3,847 have engaged and requested other payment dates therefore they have moved out of the restricted recovery group.

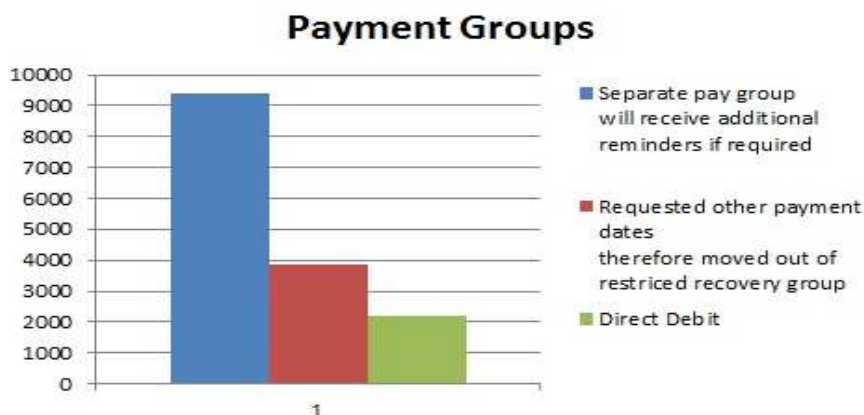


Figure 9: Payment groups – previously 100% benefit cases as at 31/3/14

Comparison with similar Authorities

Leicester’s collection performance compares well with similar-sized authorities operating broadly similar Council Tax Reduction schemes:

Authority	Main Scheme details (2013) ¹⁵						Collection Rate ¹⁶
	Band Restriction	Maximum Reduction	Capital Limit	Taper	Minimum Payment	2nd Adult Rebate	
Barnsley		85%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	95.5
Bradford		75%	£16,000	20%	£0.00		94.3
Derby	B	80%	£6,000	20%	£4.00		93.3
Doncaster		100%	£16,000	25%	£3.00	No	93.8
Gateshead		91.5%	£16,000	20%	£1.00		96.2
Kingston upon Hull		91.5%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	94.2
Leicester	B	80%	£6,000	20%	£3.60	No	94.8
Nottingham		92.5%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	93.2
Rotherham		91.5%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	97.1
Sunderland		91.5%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	96.5
Wirral		78%	£6,000	20%	£0.00	No	95.4
Wolverhampton		88%	£16,000	20%	£0.00		95.6
LB Tower Hamlets		100%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	Yes	95.4
Birmingham		80%	£16,000	20%	£0.00		95.3
LB Newham		80%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	93.2
LB Enfield		80.5%	£16,000	20%	£0.00	No	94.86

Table 25 – Reduction scheme and collection performance comparison

¹⁵ Source: Mainly from individual authority’s website

¹⁶ Source www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rate-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2013-to-2014 Table 5

6.7 Conclusion – Recovery one year on

Overall the recovery pattern followed the projections made. Actual collection performance showed that the strategy to offer additional non-statutory support coupled with the talk to us campaign, targeted at the group of payers, some of whom had not paid Council Tax for a number of years, was successful in raising awareness and providing the necessary support.

For those who did not pay or paid late and recovery action commenced, their indebtedness was kept to a minimum by the reduced level of summons costs negotiated with the Magistrates Court.

Council Tax is a statutory tax and consequently unless there is eligibility for a status discount or exemption (e.g. carer discount or severely mental impairment exemption), a charge of at least 20% is payable by a person of working age. However, for those who are in the most severe financial difficulty or with exceptional circumstances related to their vulnerability, the Council made available additional discretionary support.

An awareness of vulnerability issues was also raised amongst collection staff. Staff were reminded to offer Council Tax payers facing difficulty making their Council Tax payments discretionary assistance. Vulnerability training is carried out periodically to ensure this is embedded within the context of collecting monies from potentially the most vulnerable members of the community.

From April 2014, the decision was made to continue with the “supported” recovery process. The Council Tax Discretionary Relief fund also remains available and this will continue to be targeted to support the most financially vulnerable.

7 Equality Impact Main Conclusions

The changes to welfare benefits which began from April 2013 are very significant. While the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction was amongst the first of those changes to become live from April 2013, it will not be the last.

Considered together, the cumulative impact of the changes are likely to impact many of the same households. The changes will be particularly keenly felt in those parts of the UK in which there are both increased levels of deprivation or household reliance upon welfare payments, and those parts of the UK in which it will be most difficult to create and sustain local jobs. Both arguments may be made in respect of Leicester.

The Council nonetheless were required to implement a local scheme of Council Tax Reduction, or under Government rules, the default scheme would have applied.

The Council's assessment has been able to reach some conclusions about the impact upon most of the claims caseload with protected characteristics. It has been possible to reach conclusions in relation to the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender, and Race. There is an incidence of households with these protected characteristics within the claims population, because of the barriers to work which are faced. The Council does not conclude that the remaining protected characteristics are unaffected by these changes, rather that there is insufficient data to reach conclusions.

The Government's policy to "Localise" decision making in local welfare relief on Council Tax is proposed at the same time as a cut in funding. As a direct consequence of the Government's decision to protect Pensioners from the impact of change, the cost of the change is borne entirely by the working age part of the claim population;

People facing the greatest barriers to work are represented in higher numbers in the claims population. That includes people with disabilities; women; people with responsibility for young children predominantly lone parents; and people who may struggle with English;

It may therefore be argued that the implication of the scheme may be borne disproportionately by these groups, simply as a product of their higher representation within the claims population;

Following the introduction of Council Tax Reduction Scheme awards in Leicester City have seen a reduction in spend compared to 12/13 Council Tax Benefit awards of £11.4m (30.9%).

As a result of the introduction of the localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the collectable debt during the 2013/14 financial year increased by over £10m. The awareness campaign run by the Council has succeeded in "educating" the majority of working age Council Tax payers previously receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit, in that the charge due within the financial year was paid. A large proportion also engaged with the Council and opted to pay the charge by a preferred method of payment such as direct debit.

Although over 1,900 of the most vulnerable members of the community were given assistance via the Council Tax Discretionary Relief fund, it is likely that others who are struggling to pay their Council Tax payers are also eligible to apply. Further work is therefore required by the Council to proactively identify and offer assistance where it is required. This work has begun and will continue to be monitored.

Appendix 1: Data Sources & Bibliography

- *“Reforming Council Tax Benefit”*, Institute of Fiscal Studies, 2012
- www.ifs.org.uk
- *“Unravelling Equality? A Human Rights and Equality Impact Analysis of the Public Spending Cuts on Women in Coventry”*, Warwick University and Coventry Women’s Voices, 2011,
- <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/law/chrp/projectss/humanrightsimpactassessments/cwv/report/>
- *Department for Communities and Local Government*
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>
- *The National Archives, for UK legislation*
- www.legislation.gov.uk
- *Report to Scrutiny Commission dated 6th February 2014 (Impact of Welfare Reform)*

Appendix 2: Detailed analysis of potential vulnerable groups

The following table provides the additional detailed information, and which underpins the summary table included at section 3.4 above.

The data contained within appendices 2 and 3 is accurate where available as of May 2014.

Ref No	Client group	No Clmts	Current Benefit award	Top three wards	No Clmts	Benefit Award			
1.	a) Middle Care Component of Disability Living Allowance	1431	£1,038,258	New Parks	120	£95,793			
	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields			111	£84,558				
				Spinney Hills	139	£95,793			
	b) High Care Component of Disability Living Allowance	1100	£813,851	Spinney Hills	110	£88,372			
				Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	97	£72,741			
				Humberstone and Hamilton	75	£59,940			
2	Support Component of ESA	729	£495,099	New Parks	64	£42,256			
				Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	62	£39,468			
				Beaumont Leys	52	£34,975			
3	a) IS Couple, dependents	422	£351,070	New Parks	58	£46,581			
	Spinney Hills			48	£36,874				
	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields			39	£32,267				
	b) IS Lone parent, dependent children under 5	1913	£1,058,714	New Parks	240	£132,869			
				Beaumont Leys	180	£99,626			
				Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	165	£94,067			
	c) Non IS, Parent with children under 5	5,269	£2,871,971	Spinney Hills	555	£312,271			
				New Parks	476	£264,811			
				Beaumont Leys	409	£219,798			
4	War Widows Income	8	£5,989	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	2	£1,613			
				Beaumont Leys	2	£1,464			
				New Parks	1	£605			
5	a) Carers	301	£203,825	Spinney Hills	38	£25,235			
							Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	29	£20,087
							Humberstone & Hamilton	23	£17,452
	b) Foster carers, currently with children placed	50	£31,421	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	9	£5,826			
				New Parks	6	£4,029			
				Eyres Monsell	5	£2,774			
6	a) Disability Living Allowance, low care	1557	£1,118,706	New Parks	147	£103,611			
							Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	135	£94,427
							Spinney Hills	115	£86,731
	b) Transitioning Incapacity Benefit to ESA	47	£29,345	Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	11	£6,047			
				Castle	7	£5,284			
				Abbey	6	£4,269			
	c) Benefit cap	432	£114,260	Spinney Hills	64	£13,844			
				Stoneygate	40	£9,386			
				Beaumont Leys	25	£8,381			

Table 26: Detailed analysis of potential vulnerable group

2011 Census: Main Language

	Persons aged 3+					
	Leicester	Per cent	Nottingham	Derby	East Midlands	England
Main Language is English	228,295	72.5	87.4	90.5	93.8	92.0
Other UK Language	60	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
French	849	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3
Portuguese	1,750	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3
Spanish	349	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Other European Language (EU)	10,189	3.2	3.6	2.9	2.0	2.3
Other European Language (Non-EU)	519	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Other European Language (Non-National)	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russian	380	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Turkish	584	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2
Arabic	2,516	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.3
West/Central Asian Language	3,158	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.4
South Asian Language	55,758	17.7	3.4	4.0	2.3	2.5
East Asian Language	4,275	1.4	2.1	0.5	0.5	0.7
African Language	5,760	1.8	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.5
Other Language	405	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sign Language	163	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Total	315,011	100	100	100	100	100

Table 27: Main languages in Leicester

2011 Census: Proficiency in English

	All usual residents					
	Leicester	Per cent	Nottingham	Derby	East Midlands	England
Main Language is English	228,295	72.5	87.4	90.5	93.8	92.0
Main Language is not English; Can Speak English Very Well	30,259	9.6	4.5	2.9	2.2	3.3
Main Language is not English; Can Speak English Well	32,934	10.5	5.3	3.7	2.4	3.0
Main Language is not English; Cannot Speak English Well	18,818	6.0	2.4	2.4	1.3	1.4
Main Language is not English; Cannot Speak English	4,705	1.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3
Total	315,011	100	100	100	100	100

Table 28: Proficiency in English in Leicester

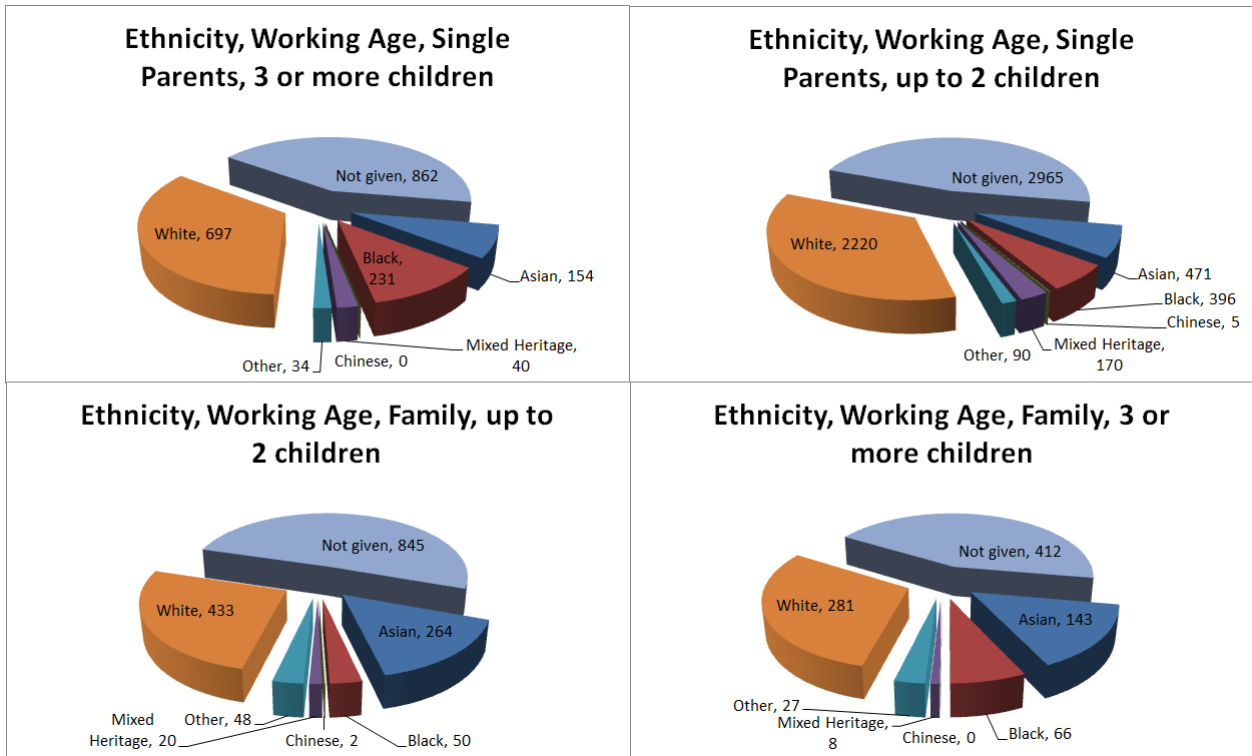


Figure 10: Ethnicity and family size – All Council Tax reduction scheme cases

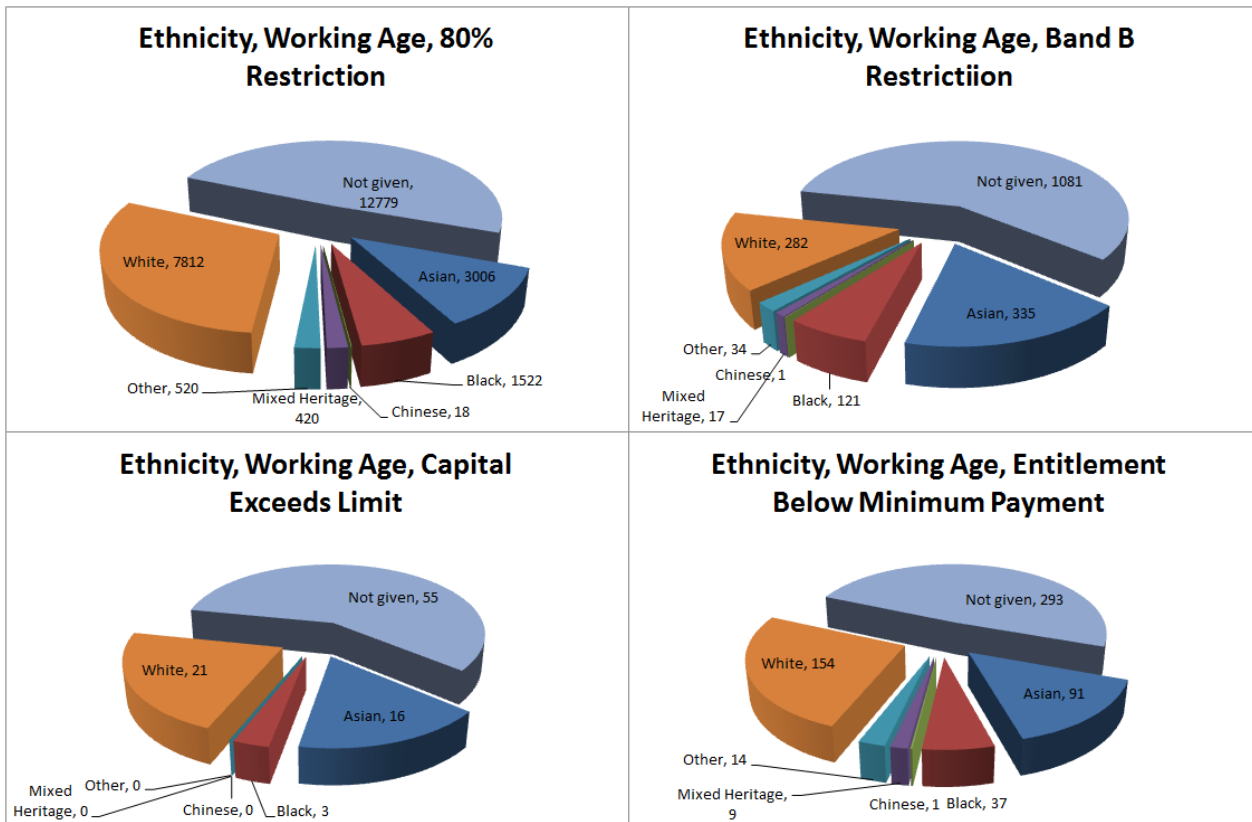


Figure 11: Ethnicity and application of Council Tax reduction scheme restrictions

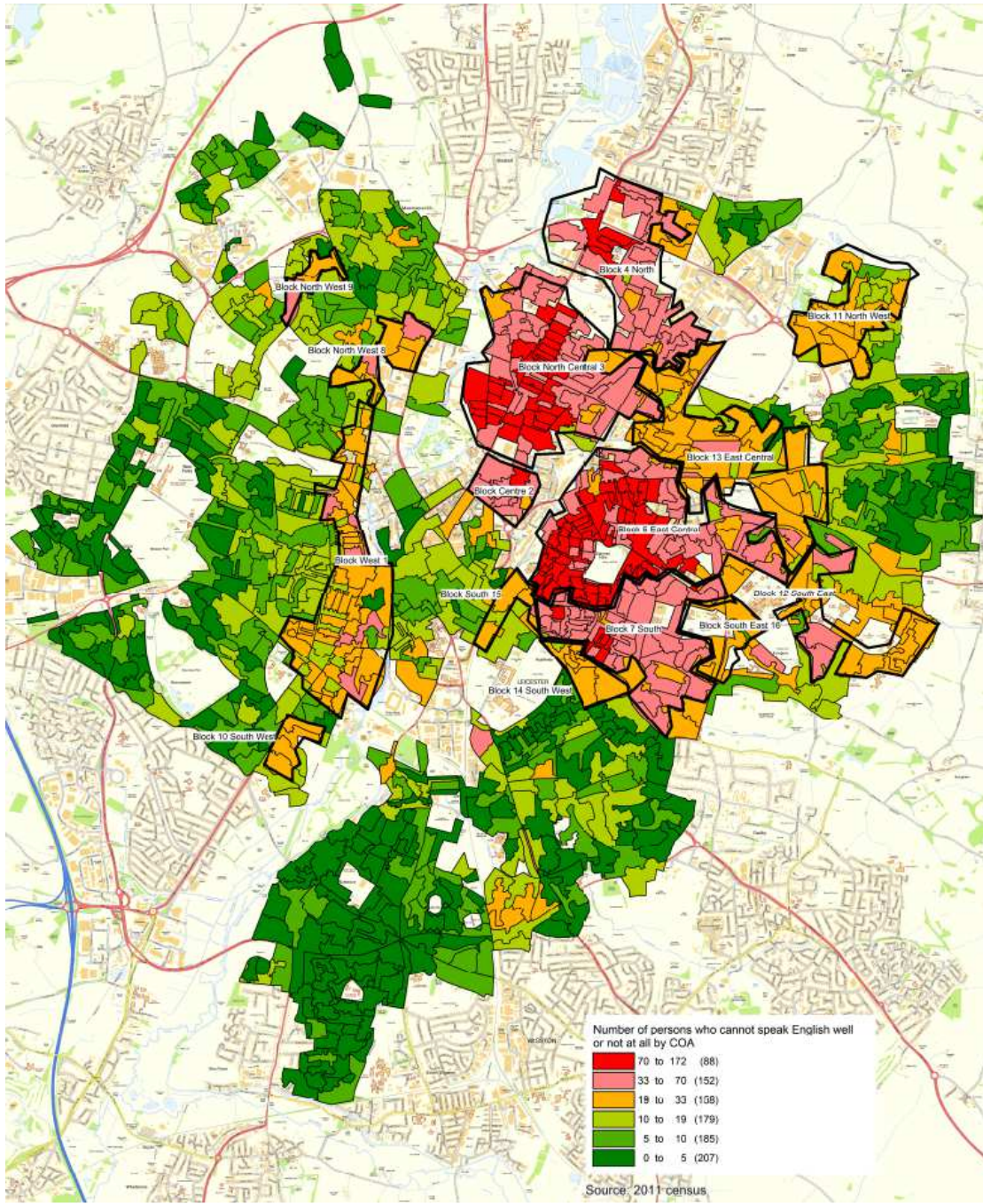


Figure 12 Distribution of proficiency in English across Leicester

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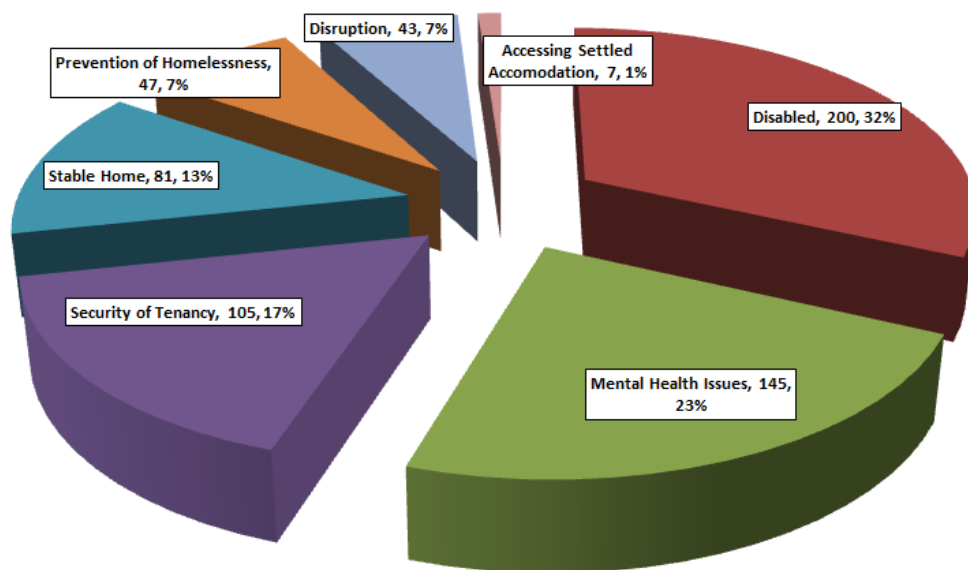


Figure 13 Number of CTDR awards based on customers most at risk

Ward	Cases	Amount Awarded
BEAUMONT LEYS	230	£30,830.92
NEW PARKS	214	£26,372.63
ABBEY	147	£20,699.57
SPINNEY HILLS	147	£20,290.83
BRAUNSTONE PARK & ROWLEY FIELDS	162	£19,912.12
EYRES MONSELL	94	£14,256.95
HUMBERSTONE & HAMILTON	85	£12,792.28
STONEYGATE	67	£12,493.78
FREEMEN	98	£12,325.12
CASTLE	93	£11,537.80
CHARNWOOD	91	£11,498.99
AYLESTONE	60	£8,669.23
FOSSE	50	£8,113.12
BELGRAVE	51	£8,005.64
COLEMAN	88	£7,878.65
LATIMER	54	£7,431.11
EVINGTON	38	£6,628.36
THURNCOURT	46	£5,734.30
WESTCOTES	46	£5,144.29
RUSHEY MEAD	34	£5,103.61
KNIGHTON	21	£3,327.19
WESTERN PARK	29	£3,279.68

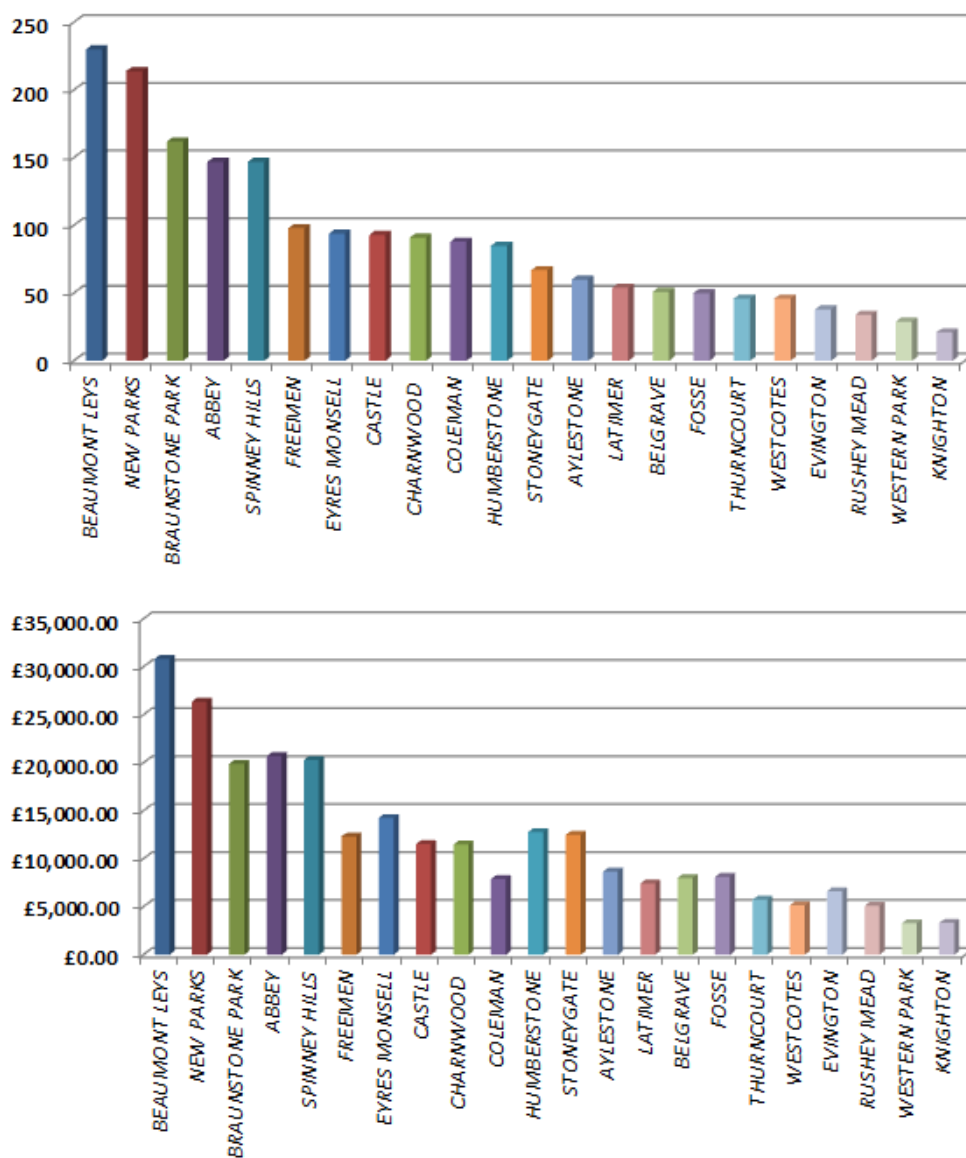


Figure 14 Number of CTDR awards by electoral ward – Number of cases and amount awarded

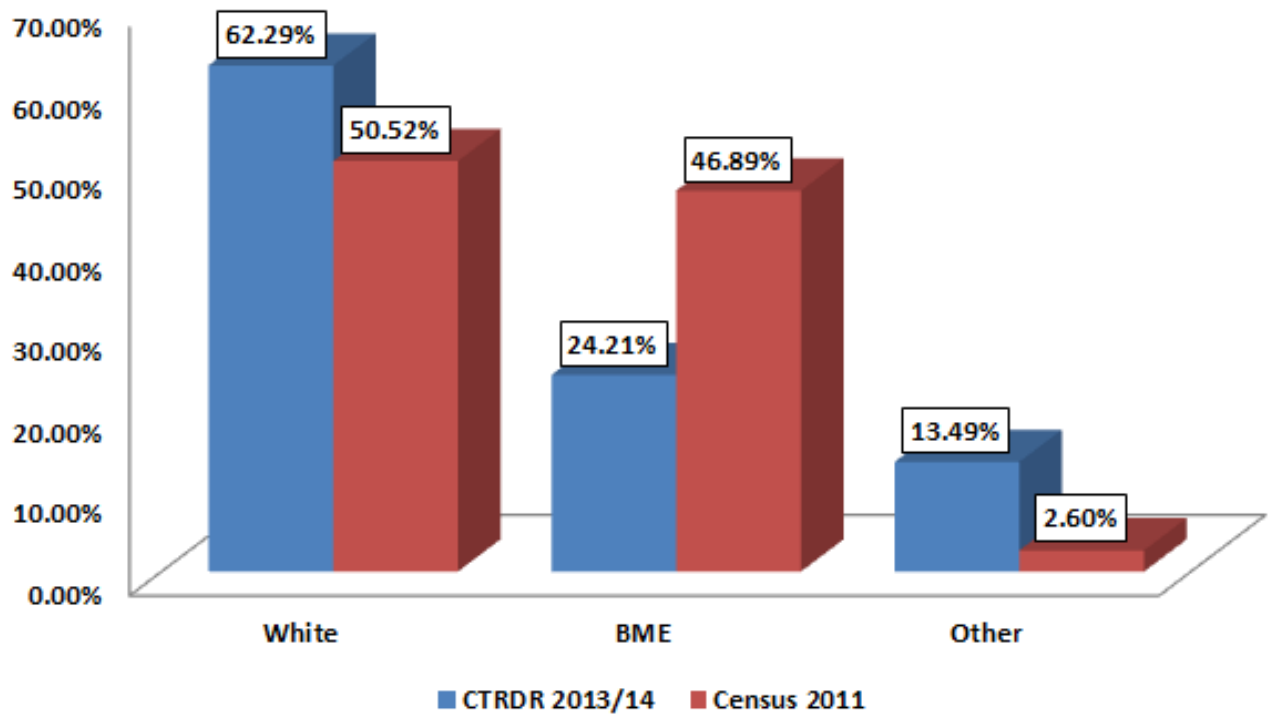


Figure 15 Percentage of CTDR awards by ethnicity versus Census 2011 data

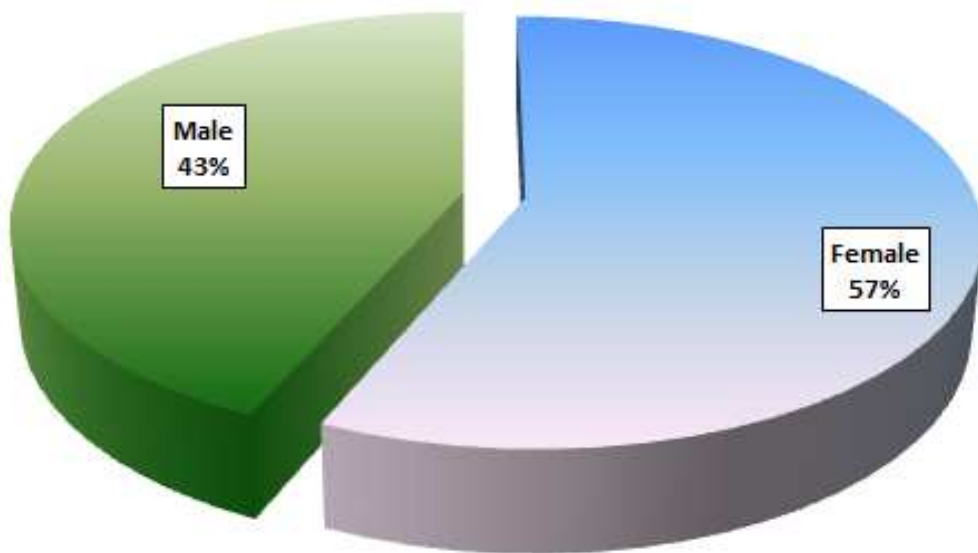


Figure 16 Number of CTDR awards by gender

Appendix 3: Detailed description of potential vulnerable groups

Within this section, a more detailed description of the potential vulnerable groups is provided.

Table 18

Ref No	Benefit Test?	Group	What for	Rationale
1	Yes	Disability Living Allowance at higher and middle rate	A benefit paid by the DWP to support living costs of a disabled person	Equality Act, disability
2	Yes	Support component of Employment Support Allowance	A benefit paid by the DWP for people of working age with limited capability for work	Equality Act, disability
3	Yes	IS claimant with children under 5	A benefit paid by the DWP, and in this case for which there are dependent children under the age of five years.	DCLG advice, duty to mitigate against child poverty
4	Yes	War Widows income	Income paid for qualifying war widows	DCLG advice, duty to support Armed Forces Covenant
5 a)	No	Carers	Carers for disabled people living in the community	Equality Act, disability
5 b)	No	Foster carers	Adults providing foster care facilities in the community	Locally determined as potentially appropriate
6	Yes	Transitioning benefit cases	Identified cases in which claimants are transitioning from current allowances to new schemes of relief under national welfare reform	Locally determined as potentially qualifying

Table 29: Detailed description of potential vulnerable groups

Appendix 4: Management of Impacts 2013-2014

1. Review of 2013 Impact Assessment Action Plan

Within the following table, the Council suggested some of the management actions to be considered on a quarter by quarter basis from April 2013.

2013, Quarter	Actions	Assessment
Quarter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine initial reactions from new taxpayers to issue of bills and reminders; • Amendments, as necessary to proposed enforcement actions; • Determine lessons learnt from first completed recovery cycle at end of quarter 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt letter issued prior to first instalment due; • Mitigation put in place, see section 6 for details. • Reminders issued, further recovery delayed until Quarter 2.
Quarter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisions to collection and enforcement policies as appropriate; • Review initial draw-down on hardship funds and similar-profile use throughout year; • Profile initial collection performance and review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review – collection policy. Negotiated limited enforcement procedures with relevant agencies. • Refer to section 6 on Hardship fund. • <insert performance stats>
Quarter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine funding implications from first year of operation • Feed into financial planning cycle for 2014/15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review.
Quarter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise arrangements for CTR from 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme retained without further substantive modification.

Table 30 – Impact Assessment Action Plan 2013

2. 2014 Impact Assessment Action Plan

The Council recommends the following management actions to be kept under quarterly review through to March 2015:

2014 Objective	Actions
Continue to maintain, monitor and improve data monitoring & analytical framework	To continue to gather and monitor equalities data on applicants, adjusting policy and promotion to enable fair and justified distribution of protection.
Promotion and partnership working	To continue and increase engagement with relevant stakeholder agencies through a variety of mediums, including literature and relevant corporate events.
Recovery, collection and performance	To continue to review performance and amend as necessary dependant on circumstances. Develop partnership arrangements to understand impact of recovery upon total indebtedness.
Long term sustainability	To develop, monitor and update ongoing strategies and range plans in line with findings.

Signing of EIA

Corporate Equalities Lead: Irene Kszyk

Date 11/12/2014

Head of Revenues & Benefits Service: Caroline Jackson

Date 11/12/2014

Contributions by: Matthew Mee, James Rattenberry Gita Mistry

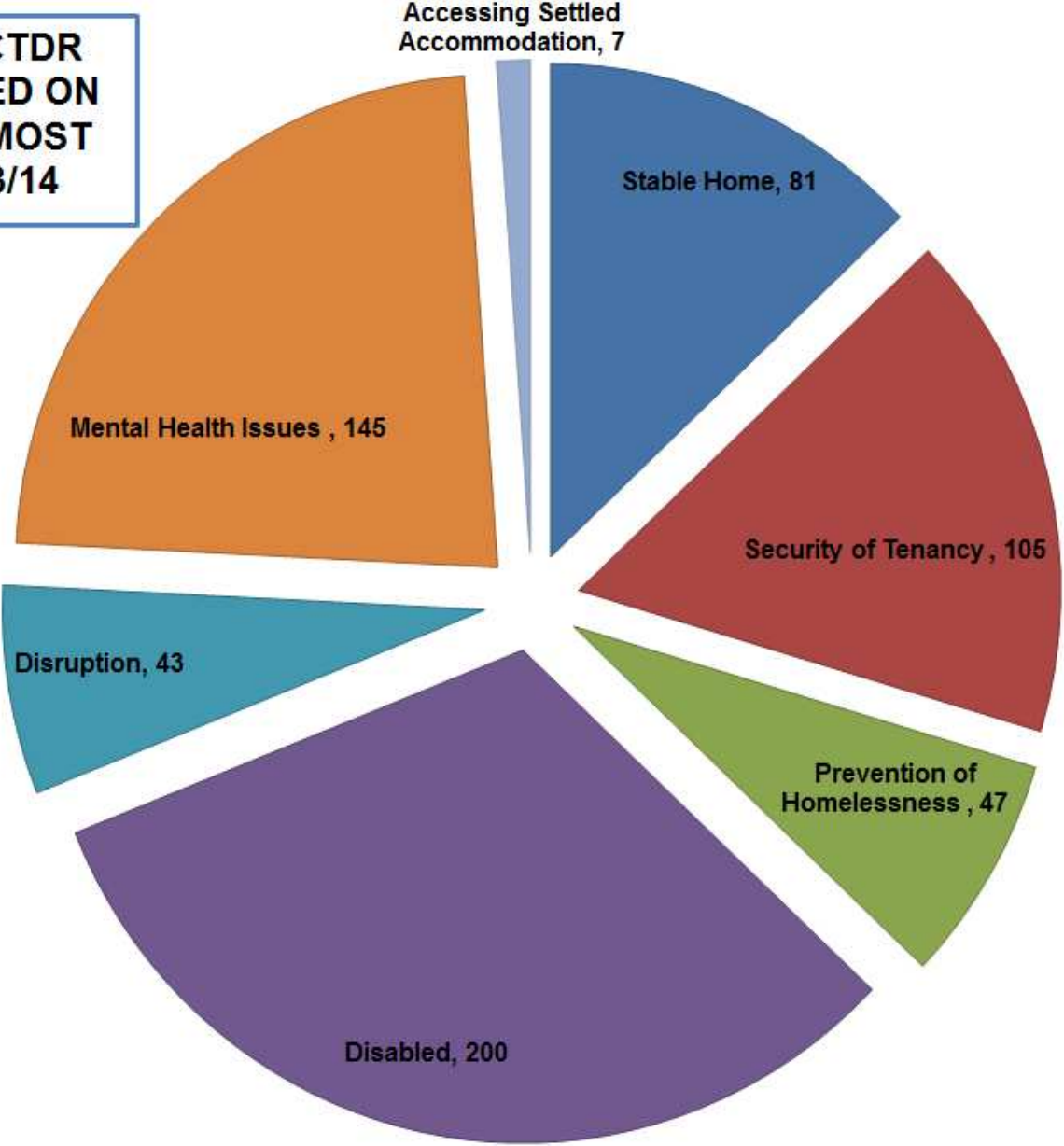
Date: 11/12/2014

Appendix A

Contains the following data:

- i) Number of CTDR awards based on customers most at risk
- ii) Number of CTDR awards by electoral ward – Number of Cases and Amount Awarded
- iii) Number of CTDR awards by Status of the Customer
- iv) Number of CTDR awards by Ethnicity
- v) Number of CTDR awards by Gender
- vi) Number of CTDR awards by Disability

**NUMBER OF CTDR
AWARDS BASED ON
CUSTOMERS MOST
AT RISK 2013/14**

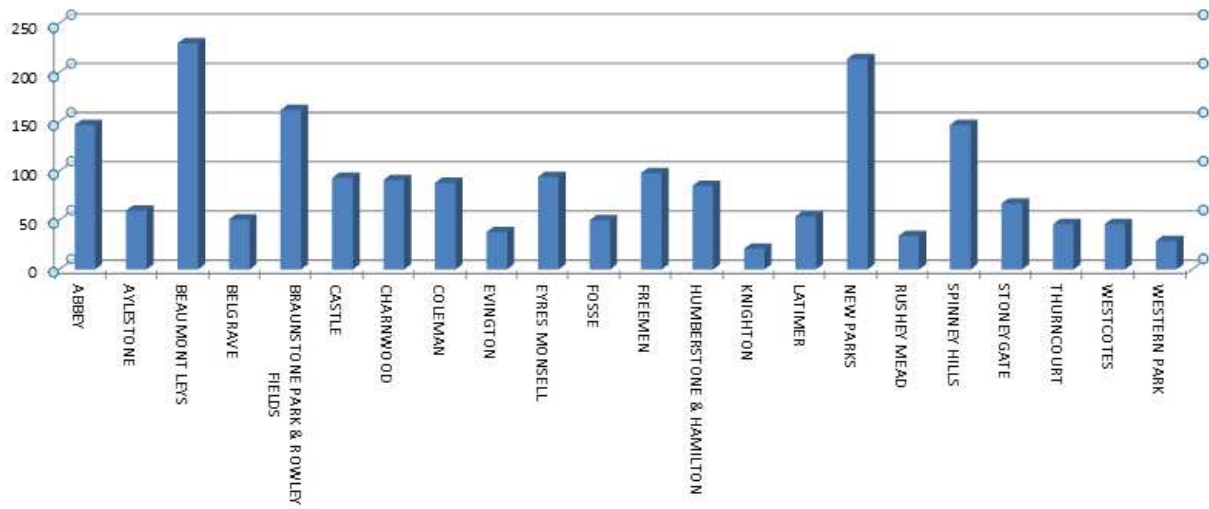


COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNT - AS AT 31/03/2014

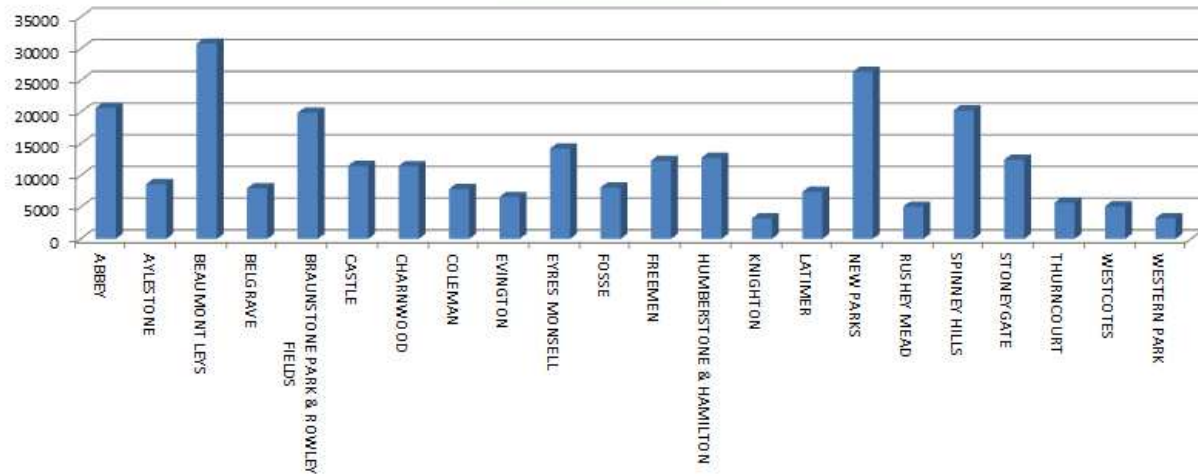
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Ward	Number of Cases	Amount Awarded
ABBEY	147	£20,699.57
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BELGRAVE	51	£8,005.64
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CHARNWOOD	91	£11,498.99
COLEMAN	88	£7,878.65
EVINGTON	38	£6,628.36
EYRES MONSELL	94	£14,256.95
FOSSE	50	£8,113.12
FREEMEN	98	£12,325.12
HUMBERSTONE & HAMILTON	85	£12,792.28
KNIGHTON	21	£3,237.19
LATIMER	54	£7,431.11
NEW PARKS	214	£26,372.63
RUSHEY MEAD	34	£5,103.61
SPINNEY HILLS	147	£20,290.83
STONEYGATE	67	£12,493.78
THURNCOURT	46	£5,734.30
WESTCOTES	46	£5,144.29
WESTERN PARK	29	£3,279.68
TOTAL	1945	£262,236.17

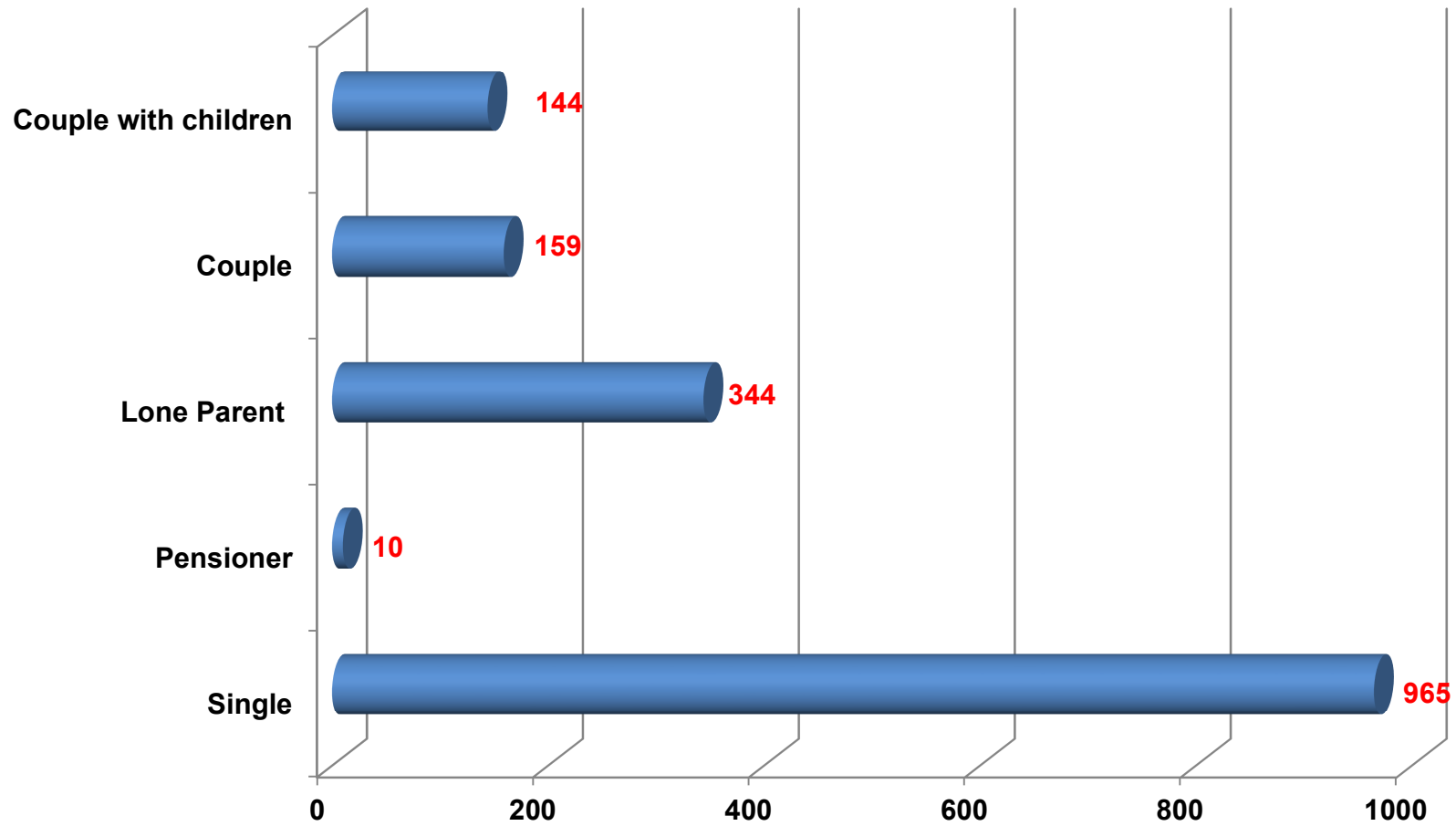
Number of Cases



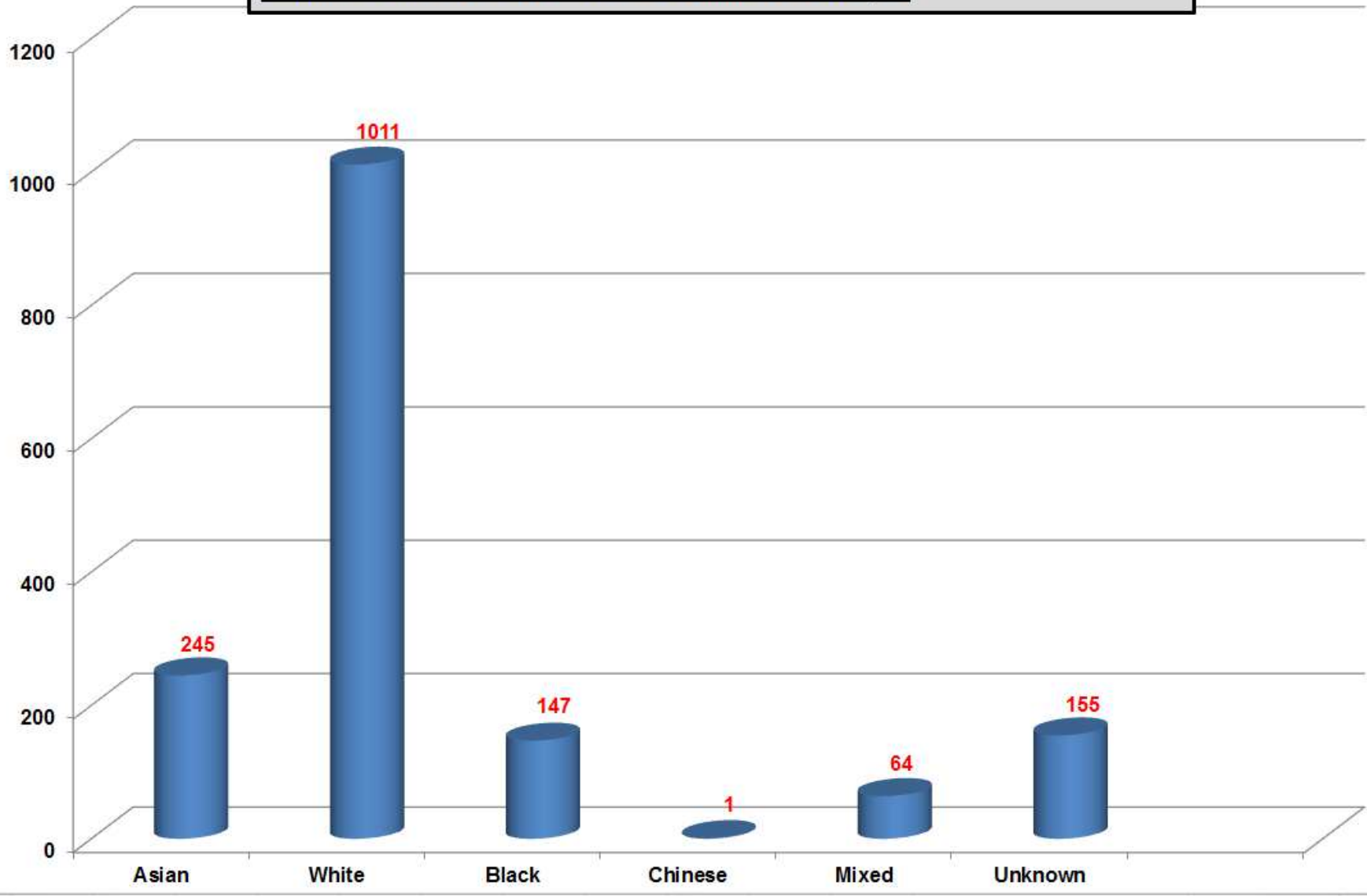
Amount Awarded



NUMBER OF CTDR AWARDS BY STATUS OF CUSTOMER

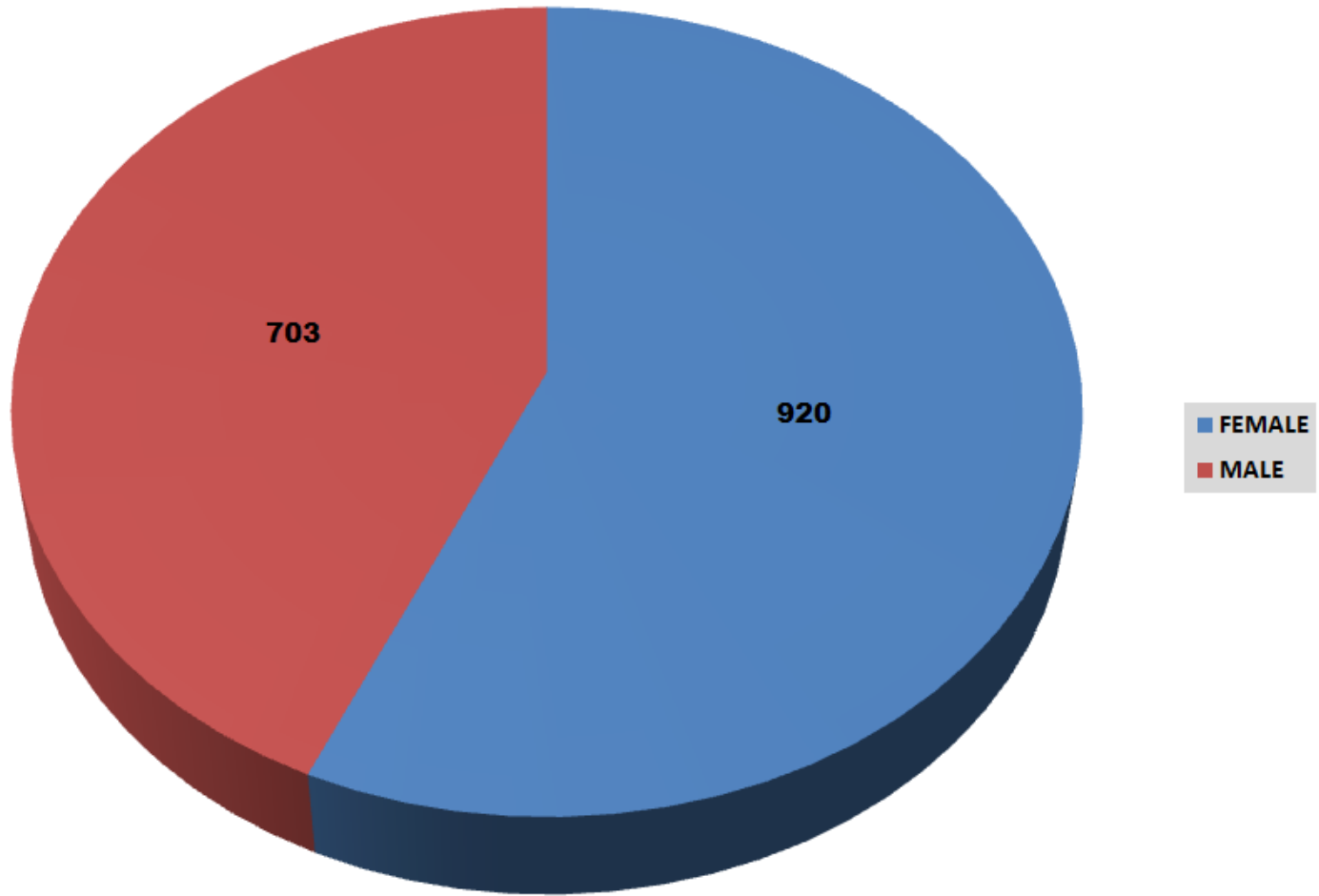


NUMBER OF CTRD AWARDS BY ETHNICITY 2013/14



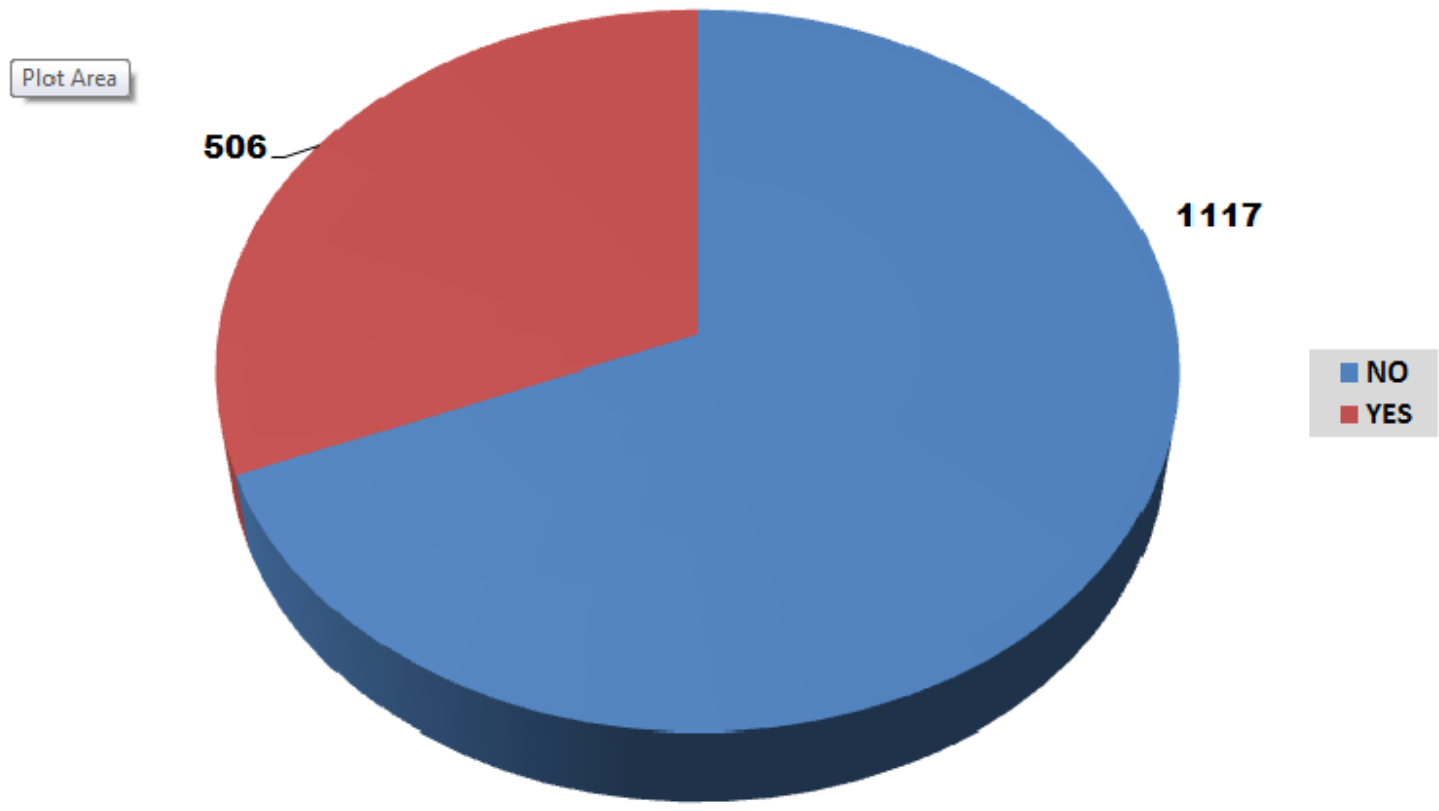
NUMBER OF CTDR AWARDS BY GENDER FOR 2013/14

Chart Area



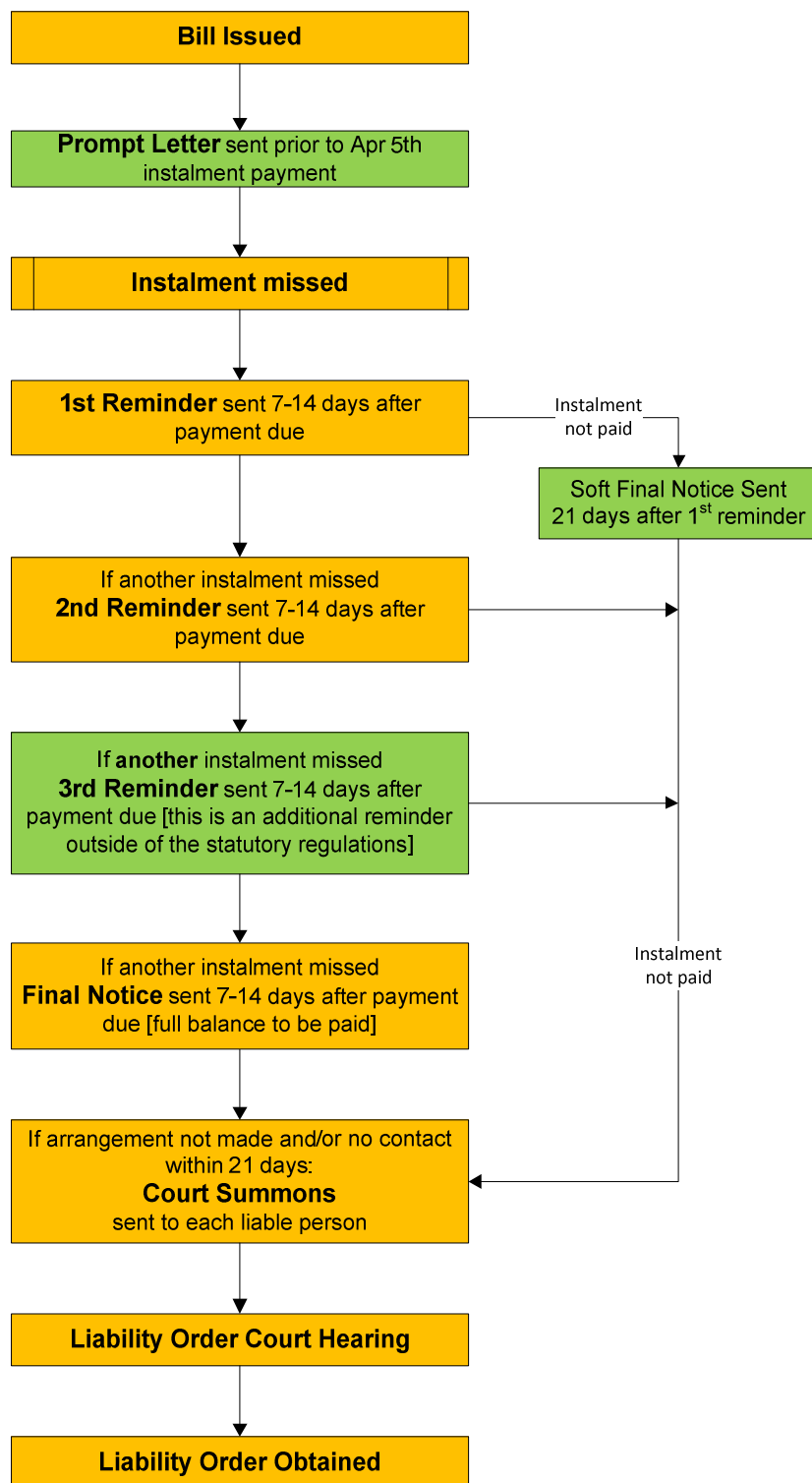
120

NUMBER OF CTDR AWARDS BY DISABILITY FOR 2013/14



Appendix B

Recovery actions for someone who has made a payment but not enough or missed a payment



Key:



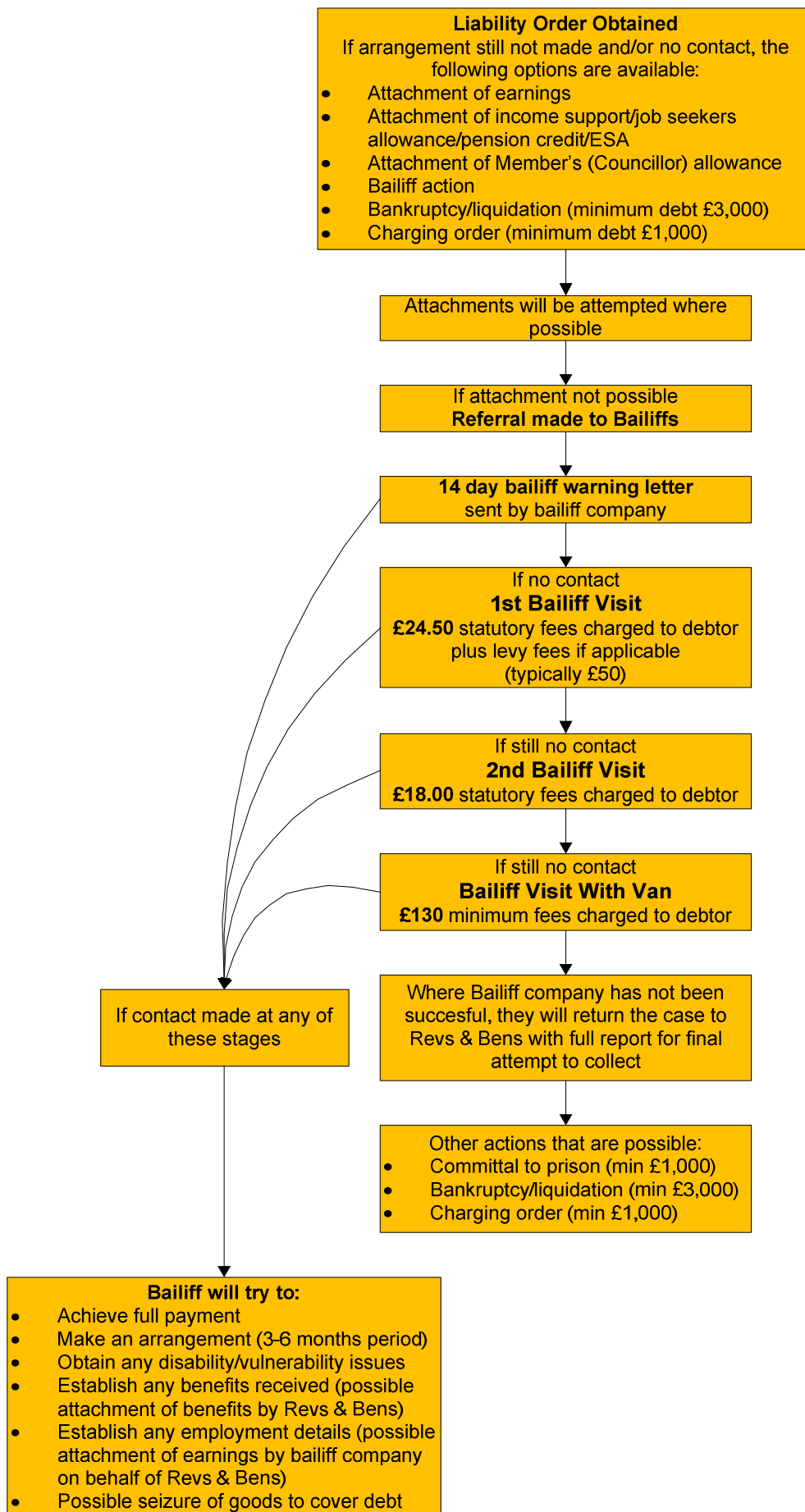
= Normal recovery action



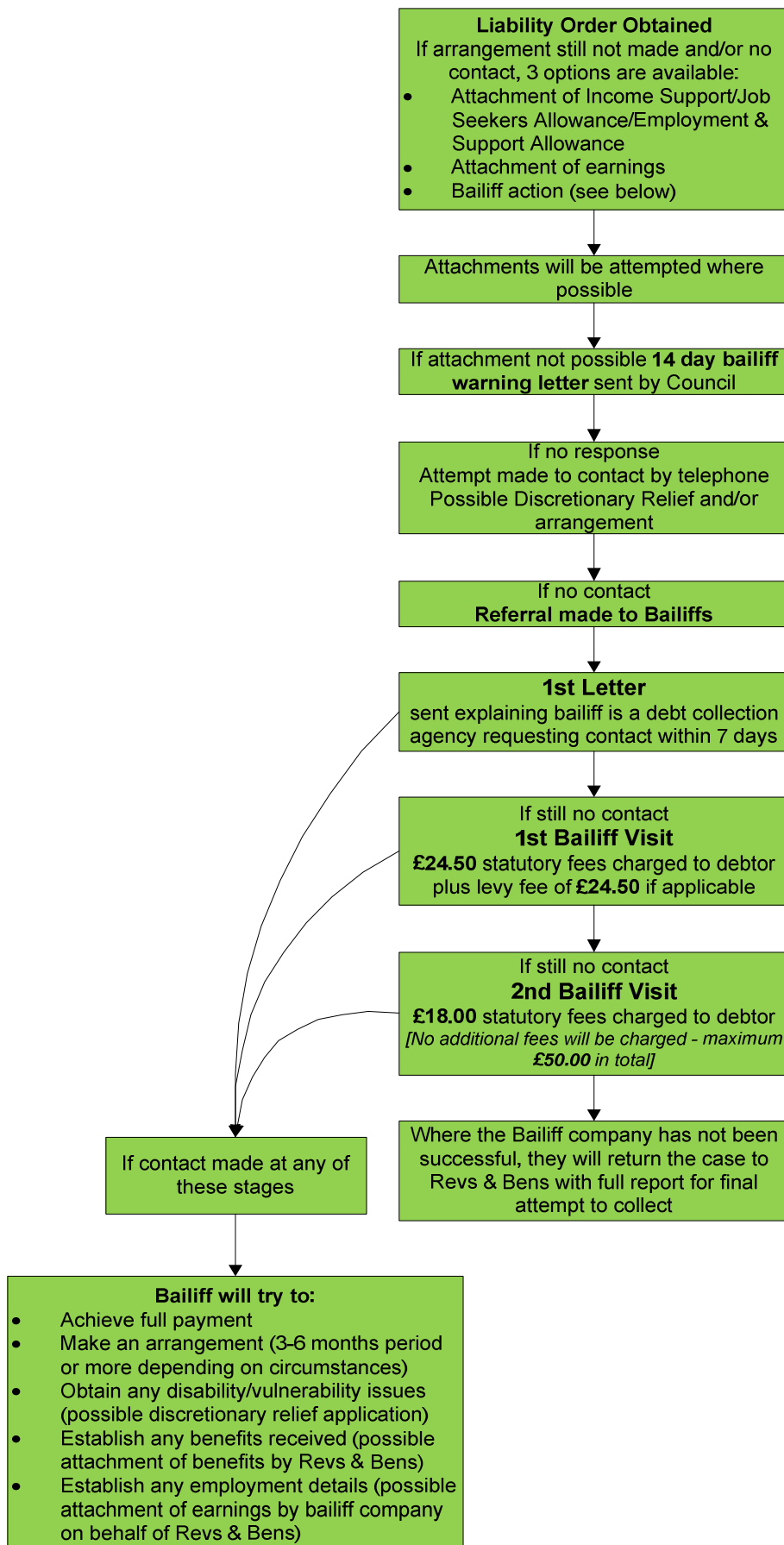
= Additional recovery action for previously maximum Council Tax Benefit accounts

Appendix B

Normal recovery actions after a Liability Order has been obtained



**Recovery actions after a Liability Order has been obtained
(previously maximum Council Tax Benefit)**



**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION
WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15**

MEETING	MEETING ITEMS	LEAD OFFICER	ACTION AGREED
1st December 2014	- Welfare Reform	Alison Greenhill	Deferred
26th January 2015 4 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council's Household waste recycling centre - Council Tax support - equality impact assessment one year on - Universal Credit delivery support gap analysis (Local Support Services Framework) - Welfare reform update 2014 - Presentation on Leicester.gov.uk - Libraries Music and Drama Service (tbc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geoff Soden - Caroline Jackson - Caroline Jackson - Caroline Jackson - Jill Craig - Adrian Wills 	
9th March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance of garden waste collections scheme - Library Summer Scheme performance - VCR Review update (tbc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steve Weston - Adrian Wills - Miranda Cannon 	

