

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	
<b>Date:</b>	8 April 2019	
<b>Report of:</b>	Borough Treasurer	<b>Report No:</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sue Johnson	<b>Tele No:</b> 1502
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2019/20</b>	
<b>Non-Confidential:</b>	This report does <b>not</b> contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.	
<b>Purpose:</b>	Confirmation of Bolton Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	Cabinet confirms the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme	

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1** Local Council Tax Support was introduced under the Local Government Finance Bill 2011 to replace Council Tax Benefit.
- 1.2** Bolton Council has had a Local Council Tax Support Scheme in place since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to support residents on low income with their Council Tax charge.
- 1.3** There are two Schemes in Bolton, a Government Prescribed Scheme for Pensioners and a Local Scheme for working age residents.

## **2. Bolton's Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

- 2.1** Bolton's Local Council Tax Support Scheme is published on the Council website and can be accessed by following this link [www.bolton.gov.uk/benefits/council-tax-support](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/benefits/council-tax-support).
- 2.2** There have been no fundamental amendments to Bolton Council's Scheme since April 2017, when changes were made following a public consultation.
- 2.3** A hard copy of the Bolton's Local Council Tax Support Scheme has been placed in the Members rooms for information.

## **3. Supporting Residents**

- 3.1** Bolton residents can make a claim online through the Bolton Council website and assistance to do this can be provided in the One Stop Shop where customers have free access to the internet.
- 3.2** The One Stop Shop can also provide information and advice relating to the Scheme and residents can access a benefit calculator on the Council website to find out if qualify.
- 3.3** Information relating to the scheme is also contained in the Council Tax leaflet that is issued with the annual bills.

## **4. Promoting the Scheme**

- 4.1** With the introduction of Universal Credit, it has become increasingly important to ensure that Bolton residents are aware of Council Tax Support and the need to make a separate claim in addition to their claim for Universal Credit. The housing cost element of Universal Credit is in relation to rent costs and does not cover Council Tax costs.
- 4.2** It is also important to note that in addition to Local Council Tax Support, residents can also claim a discretionary Local Council Tax Reduction payment if they make a late claim for Council Tax Support or have a shortfall between their Council Tax Support and their Council Tax costs.