

# COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT WORKING AGE SCHEME CHANGES 2018 TO 2019



In the summer of 2016-17 we ran a public consultation on 8 changes that we were considering making to our working age Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme. Following the consultation, Members considered the responses and, at a meeting of the Full Council in January 2017, made the decision to implement 3 of the changes from 01 April 2017 and 2 of the changes as set out below from 01 April 2018. Of the 8 proposed changes 3 have not been implemented.

## CHANGES TO THE SCHEME FROM 1 APRIL 2018

### **Minimum Income Floor (MIF) for self-employed claimants**

This will assume an income from businesses that have been operating for more than 12 months that is equivalent to working 35 hours at National Living Wage or National Minimum Wage. This change will be applied to affected working age claims from 1 April 2018. In February 2018 we wrote to all working age self-employed applicants and/or partners with current Council Tax Support claims to tell them how they will be affected.

### **Remove the Work Related Activity Component for new Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG)**

From April 2017 ESA no longer pays claimants in the WRAG any extra benefit. We therefore will not be allowing an extra amount in the calculation of their CTS to balance the extra income from April 2018.

### **If you are affected by any of these changes**

If you are concerned about how any of these changes will affect your ability to pay your Council Tax bill please get in touch. There are things we can offer that may help.

Help with budgeting and managing your money including arranging an instalment plan which works for you and a benefit check, to make sure you are getting all of the help you are entitled to.

We can also look at whether the Exceptional Hardship Fund can give you additional financial help. As part of the application process we will want to know about all of your income and expenditure. You will also have to tell us what steps you are taking to increase your self-employed income and if anything is stopping you from working 35 hours per week. You must be in receipt of Council Tax Support to be able to apply to the Exceptional Hardship fund.

Please contact Customer Services on 01752 668000 or visit First Stop, New George Street for further advice and assistance.