



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: John Mitchell

Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday, 17 November 2015
Time: 19:30
Venue: Committee Room
Address: Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Members: Councillors Heather Asker, Graham Barker, Paul Davies, Alan Dean (Chairman), Marie Felton, Thom Goddard, Stephanie Harris, Barbara Light, Edward Oliver, Geoffrey Sell

Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given two working days prior notice.

AGENDA PART 1

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2015 5 - 10
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee in relation to call in of a decision
- 5 Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee (standing item)

6	Invited reports from the Executive	
7	Cabinet Forward Plan	11 - 16
8	Scrutiny Work Topics	17 - 38
9	Budget 2016/17 Overview	39 - 104
10	Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Consultation	105 - 226
11	Enforcement Scoping Report	227 - 234
12	Draft Air Quality Action Plan	235 - 282
13	Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent	

MEETINGS AND THE PUBLIC

Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the Council's Cabinet or Committee meetings and listen to the debate. All agendas, reports and minutes can be viewed on the Council's website www.uttlesford.gov.uk. For background papers in relation to this meeting please contact committee@uttlesford.gov.uk or phone 01799 510430/433

Members of the public and representatives of parish and town councils are permitted to speak or ask questions at any of these meetings. You will need to register with the Democratic Services Officer by midday two working days before the meeting.

The agenda is split into two parts. Most of the business is dealt with in Part 1 which is open to the public. Part II includes items which may be discussed in the absence of the press or public, as they deal with information which is personal or sensitive for some other reason. You will be asked to leave the meeting before Part II items are discussed.

Agenda and Minutes are available in alternative formats and/or languages. For more information please call 01799 510510.

Facilities for people with disabilities

The Council Offices has facilities for wheelchair users, including lifts and toilets. The Council Chamber has an induction loop so that those who have hearing difficulties can hear the debate.

If you are deaf or have impaired hearing and would like a signer available at a meeting, please contact committee@uttlesford.gov.uk or phone 01799 510430/433 as soon as possible prior to the meeting.

Fire/emergency evacuation procedure

If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest designated fire exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by a designated officer. It is vital you follow their instructions.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

Telephone: 01799 510433, 510369 or 510548

Email: Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 10 SEPTEMBER 2015 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillor A Dean – Chairman.
Councillors H Asker, G Barker, P Davies, M Felton, T Goddard, S Harris, B Light, E Oliver and G Sell.

Also present: Councillors H Rolfe and M Lemon
Adam Dodgshon – Principal Consultant PAS and Simon Ford – Principal Consultant Amec Foster Wheeler.

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Assistant Director Corporate Services), L Cleaver (Communications Manager), M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), V Taylor (Business Improvement and Performance Officer) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

SC7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared the following non - pecuniary interests

Councillors Barker, Harris, Davies and Oliver as they had been members of the Scrutiny Committee from 2011 – 2015 when the Local Plan had been considered. Councillor Oliver was also a member of the Local Plan working group during that period.

Councillor Sell as a member of Stansted Parish Council.

Councillor G Barker said he had been granted a dispensation in that he was the husband of Councillor Susan Barker and she had been involved in the Local Plan process from 2007- 2015.

SC8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2015 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Harris in the list of apologies for the meeting.

SC9 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Adam Dodgshon from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) and Simon Ford from Amec Foster Wheeler. They were to present the findings of the review, requested by the Scrutiny Committee, into the process leading up to the withdrawal of the Local Plan in December 2014. As this was the first formal feedback of the report the Chairman suggested that this meeting should be an opportunity for members to ask questions, digest and understand the findings of the report and then

consider how to take it forward within the council. He did not intend this meeting to challenge members or officers about the actions taken but in due course the council would see what lessons had been learned.

Mr Dodgshon presented the report. He explained that it was a high-level review of the work to date and aimed to consider how the council could move forward with the new Local Plan.

The review had considered the following areas - the timeline of the plan preparation, the Inspector's letter, the Sustainability Appraisal, the site selection process, engagement and duty to cooperate. It also included a summary and conclusions.

Mr Dodgshon said that the timeline provided a commentary of how the decisions had been made. He had reviewed the minutes of every council meeting that had discussed the Local Plan between 2007 -2014. This had revealed that the expected political structures were in place and there had been no process failure or impropriety.

However, some other areas had been highlighted which should be addressed in the new plan process. One concern was the lack of any formal reviews in response to disagreements about the direction of the Plan. The Plan should have been evidence led but throughout the document the narrative appeared inconsistent. There was also evidence that a political mandate had created the potential for disagreement between officers and members. The plan preparation had taken seven years, which was not the norm, and whilst there had been fundamental policy changes during this period there should be better resilience built into the plan to prevent these unforeseen delays. The council should also look at how to deal with contrary opinions and realise the importance of a comprehensive risk register.

In relation to the Inspector's letter, the main matters of concern was the shortfall in the council's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and the lack of clear justification for the site at Elsenham. Other matters such as the Duty to Cooperate and the Sustainability Assessment required further work but other elements of the plan such as the 5 year land supply, employment and settlement classifications had been regarded as good pieces of work.

Mr Dodgson explained the test of soundness that all Inspectors had to take into account and the options open to the Inspector if the Plan failed these tests. He considered that the decision of the Inspector to withdraw the Plan was consistent with these tests. As a comparison, he gave details of recent decisions for other authorities whose plans had been withdrawn or rejected. He said Uttlesford's Plan was by no means a complete failure and work that had been done could be carried forward to the new plan. The Inspector had helpfully set out the key pieces of work going forward – a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment, cooperation on strategic issues and a new Sustainability Appraisal.

Mr Ford continued the presentation. One area that the report had identified was that the Plan included an excessive number of options for policies and a

lack of narrative around how sites had been identified, in particular the site at Elsenham. The council was now required to prepare a new Sustainability Appraisal, which was a key technical document and should provide a transparent narrative on the options and how the sites were chosen. This was currently being prepared and there were positive signs from the early draft, which had recently been prepared.

Mr Ford said site selection should have an effective mechanism and process. The Inspector had been concerned that that the council could not evidence that it had taken account of all three factors - suitability, availability and viability. The council should first establish which sites were potentially available, then develop a vision that fits the sense of place and then assess all sites equally under a common framework, taking account of the OAN. This process should not be developer led.

There had also been concerns about the limited documented evidence of an Engagement Strategy and evidence of ongoing engagement with key agencies during the plan preparation. Mr Ford said this was about process and documentation and could easily be addressed.

Mr Ford concluded that the council would not need to start from scratch. The main actions were for the council to focus on the key areas identified by the Inspector and consider the resources and support that might be required. It should also look to develop resilience against changes in policies to ensure the plan kept moving forward. He emphasised that the importance of robust evidence could not be overstated.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dodgshon and Mr Ford for conducting a very thorough review and for the clear presentation of the findings.

The Committee discussed the report and asked the following questions.

Do you consider that Full Council has been sufficiently engaged through the process? *This is really for the council to decide. Standard practice is for Full Council to consider the key stages. If significant issues are raised these can also be brought to the council.*

Uttlesford is a very popular district and residents feel passionate about their areas. How is it best to engage with the community? *Community engagement is an emotive issue but there are a number of important things to consider. It should be upfront, start early, be ongoing and consistent and clear in the messages. The public should be clear on what value they can add to the process but also about what can't be changed within statutory requirements. The process should be mapped, audited and trackable.*

Do you consider that Scrutiny Committee has done enough in this process as the timeline only mentions meetings in 2007 and 2012? *For much of this period, work was continuing behind the scenes on technical studies. The committee was probably engaged when necessary, but it might be worth looking at the role of Scrutiny going forward.*

Can the PAS offer a view on the plan before it is submitted? *We expect that PAS will remain a critical friend and offer support with assessing the plan's documents. However, at this stage the future of PAS funding and the council's requirements are unclear.*

Please can you explain the following phrases in the report?

Prevailing political desires – *this was taken from the LDF working group August 2010 where there was a policy to reduce the housing number which appeared to be politically rather than officer led.*

Dodgy assumption – *this referred to a discussion at the working group around the zero migration assumption, many examinations had failed on this point.*

How can officers best advise members about complicated advice and technical issues so that members fully understand the issues and can be sure that the advice is sound? *Probably the most effective way is to arrange focused member briefing sessions on particular issues. The PAS has also produced some learning sessions.*

Is there value in using a project management tool (eg Prince 2) for this process? *This type of project management tool is not generally appropriate for Local Government projects, but the underlying principles are a sound basis to include in the project plan. It is also very important to produce a detailed risk register, so that mitigation measures can be triggered in the light of changed events during the production of the plan.*

Members welcomed the report and said the presentation had been helpful in summarising the findings. The council was now working collaboratively on the new plan and there was optimism about the outcome. It was now for the council to move forward by focusing on the identified areas and a lot of this work had already taken place.

The committee discussed how to take this matter forward. The Chairman suggested sending the report to Cabinet, with a request for a response in the form of an action plan; then the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the committee could consider what further action, if any, was required.

Other members felt it was unnecessary to ask for a response from Cabinet as this would needlessly hinder the process. The report had been published and many of the identified actions had already been taken on board. Members were also aware that the Scrutiny Committee had finite resources and there were other service areas that it wished to consider.

The Chairman felt that Cabinet, as the responsible body, should at least acknowledge the report to ensure that the recommendations were progressed. Members said that they would like to receive feedback on the progress of the Plan. Officers explained that this could be achieved through the pre-scrutiny process, which gave the committee the opportunity to comment on key issues before reports were considered by PPWG and Cabinet. The Leader also offered to feed back progress to the committee when appropriate.

The Chairman suggested forwarding the report to Cabinet, for it to taken into account in the new Local Plan preparation. He proposed the following recommendation, which was seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED that

- 1 The committee welcomes the report from the Planning Advisory Service and thanks its representatives for their detailed work on identifying flaws in the past process and in making recommendations for improving the process used to produce the new local plan.
- 2 The PAS report and the minutes of this meeting be referred to Cabinet, working with the Planning Policy Working Group, and ask that it take account of the findings of the report and the Scrutiny Committee's deliberations

SC10 **CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received the latest version of the Forward Plan. As requested at the last meeting this now included a column, which set out brief information about each item.

SC11 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a list of suggested topics for Scrutiny to review from Councillors Dean and Davies. The Chairman suggested appointing a task group to look at this list in detail and suggest key areas for the committee to review.

Councillor Sell said that at the last meeting the committee said it would focus on internal rather than external relationships. He suggested that the committee look at the enforcement service for its first review and members agreed.

RESOLVED

- 1 The committee appoint a task group, comprising Councillors A Dean, G Barker and B Light, to consider areas for review and recommend a work programme to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 November 2015.
- 2 Officers prepare a scoping report on the enforcement service for the next meeting of the committee.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

**UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**

KEY DECISIONS

Decision	Decision maker	Date of decision	Brief information about the item and details of documents submitted for consideration	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained
Housing Strategy	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider and adopt a new Housing Strategy The Housing Strategy sets out how the council wants to improve both the quality of accommodation and lives of people who live in the district	Cllr J Redfern	Andrew Taylor – Assistant Director Planning and Building Control ataylor@uttlesford.gov.uk
Homelessness Strategy	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider and adopt a new Homelessness Strategy The Homelessness Strategy sets out how the council will try to prevent and tackle homelessness in the district	Cllr J Redfern	Roz Millership - Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services rmillership@uttlesford.gov.uk
HRA Business Plan	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider and adopt the revised Housing Revenue Account Business Plan The Business Plan sets out the council's housing investment priorities and	Cllr J Redfern	Roz Millership - Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services rmillership@uttlesford.gov.uk

Decision	Decision maker	Date of decision	Brief information about the item and details of documents submitted for consideration	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained
			sources of funding to deliver these over the next 30 years.		
Sale of land at 5 and 5a Wood Lane	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider request to purchase an area of council owned land in front of 5 and 5a Wood Lane in Birchanger	Cllr J Redfern	Roz Millership – Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services rmillership@uttlesford.gov.uk

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

Private Decision	Brief details - for information	Decision maker	Date	Reason for decision to be taken in private	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained

OTHER DECISIONS

Non-Key Decision	To be taken in private?	Decision maker	Date	Brief information about the item and details of any documents submitted for consideration	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained
Transfer of Land to Great Chesterford Parish Council	NO	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider the transfer of UDC land (secured under a s106 agreement) to the east of Great Chesterford Recreation Ground, for nil value to Great Chesterford Parish Council in order to provide education/community space in accordance with the council's Asset management Strategy. .	Cllr Howell	Adrian Webb – Director of Finance and Corporate Services awebb@uttlesford.gov.uk
Assets of Community Value	No	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To consider additions to the list of Assets of Community Value submitted by Town	Cllr Barker	Andrew Taylor – Assistant Director Planning and Building

			(deferred from 22 October)	and Parish Councils		Control ataylor@uttlesford.gov.uk
Car Parking Review	No	Cabinet	10 December 2015	To receive the Car Parking Review following consultation with Town Teams and relevant Parish/Town Councils. Report to include overview of situation, commentary on Scrutiny review and proposals for changes to tariffs, timings etc.	Cllr Barker	Andrew Taylor – Assistant Director Planning and Building Control ataylor@uttlesford.gov.uk
Treasury Management Benchmarking and Risk Review	No	Cabinet	10 December 2015		Cllr Howell	Angela Knight – Assistant Director – Finance aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Financial Outlook and 2016-17 Budget Strategy	No	Cabinet	10 December 2015	Following the Autumn Statement this incorporates the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Reserve Strategy along with setting the basis on which the 2016/17 budget will be prepared.	Cllr S Howell	Adrian Webb – Director of Finance and Corporate Services awebb@uttlesford.gov.uk
Budget Monitoring Qtr 2	No	Cabinet	10 December 2015	Report on the Council's finances following the completion of the second quarter of the financial year.	Cllr S Howell	Angela Knight – Assistant Director – Finance aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Local Council Tax Support	No	Cabinet	10 December	To determine the Local Council Tax Support	Cllr S Howell	Adrian Webb – Director of

2016/17			2015	scheme for 2016/17 for recommendation to Full Council on 17 December 2015.		Finance and Corporate Services awebb@uttlesford.gov.uk
---------	--	--	------	--	--	--

Committee: Scrutiny

Agenda Item

Date: 17 November 2015

8

Title: Scrutiny work topics

Author: Richard Auty, Assistant Director Corporate Services Item for decision

Summary

1. This report presents the outcome of discussions by the working group established to assess the suggestions for Scrutiny work topics made by councillors.

Recommendations

2. The committee approves the recommended work topics set out in paragraphs 10 to 12 and instructs officers to update the Scrutiny Work Programme accordingly.

Financial Implications

3. None. There are no costs associated with this report.

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Several suggested topics include issues around consultation and/or communication
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	Several suggested topics include issues relating to sustainability
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The majority of suggested topics will have an impact on officer time

Situation

6. At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 September, a working group was established, comprising Cllrs Dean, Barker and Light, to discuss the potential work topics submitted by councillors and recommend which should be taken forward.
7. The task group has met twice and has discussed at length each of the 32 suggestions. The task group has identified a number of topics which it recommends are added to the work programme now or next year. Many other topics will be kept on a long list and can be returned to in the future.
8. Attached as Appendix A is a table listing each of the 32 suggestions. The middle column of the table shows where the identified issue has been looked at by Scrutiny in the last two years, or where there is a CABLE (Cabinet and Portfolio Leads) project already looking at the subject. The right hand column provides notes following discussion by the working group, including extra information requested by the working group during discussions and the outcome of the discussions.
9. Attached as Appendix B is the current version of the Scrutiny Work Programme. If the committee approves the recommendation on this report, agreed topics will be added to the programme by officers.
10. The topics identified by the working group and recommended to be added to the 2015/16 work programme are as follows:
 - i) S106 and CILs. The working group suggests an officer report in March or May 2016.
 - ii) Air Quality Management. The council will be consulting the public on a new Air Quality Management Plan in early 2016. Due to time constraints it has been necessary to bring a report to this meeting.
 - iii) Building Control function . This would need to be looked at by Scrutiny ahead of a Cabinet decision in March about the proposed Building Control Partnership.
 - iv) Enforcement . This was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at its September meeting. A scoping report is on the agenda of this meeting.
 - v) Reliance on New Homes Bonus. This forms part of the budget papers at this meeting.
11. The topics identified by the working group and recommended to be timetabled for the 2016/17 year are as follows:
 - i) Relationship between UDC and ECC. Although several of the submissions were specifically regarding perceived problems with Highways, the working group discussed wider concepts of how the council interacts with Essex County Council. The working group suggests it would be helpful for the committee to receive a report setting out how relevant officers in the Planning department see the relationship with ECC with regard to education and highways.

ii) Quiet Lanes. The working group suggests a scoping report and background information be prepared about this initiative for a meeting in the 2016/17 year.

12. The topics identified by the working group as being potentially suitable for review in the longer term, but not recommended to be timetabled for now, are as follows:

i) Planning appeals. The working group recommends no action is taken at least until the Secretary of State decision on the Elsenham appeal is known

ii) Affordable housing provision. The working group recommends that the committee waits until the position on the Housing Act is clear.

iii) Evaluation of controls in place regarding information provided by developers.

iv) Methods used to assess sustainability in planning applications

v) The possibility of enhancing the council's recycling and waste collection scheme

vi) The council tax arrears collection process

vii) Community engagement. A sub group of the Constitution Working Group has been established to look at this. The Scrutiny working group suggests the Scrutiny Committee waits until this sub group has done its work before considering this topic.

viii) The effectiveness of the North Essex Parking Partnership. This was an additional suggestion from Cllr Dean at the second working group meeting.

ix) Devolution. This was an additional suggestion from Cllr Light at the second working group meeting. The working group then decided it would best be dealt with as set out in paragraph 14 below.

13. The topics identified by the working group as being unsuitable for review are as follows:

i) Strategic planning systems. The working group decided this was already covered by the Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG).

ii) 5 Year land Supply. The working group noted the Inspector's view that the council's approach was robust. In addition it is an issue discussed by PPWG.

iii) Separate collection of dry recyclable materials. The working group was satisfied that this had already been considered by the Waste Strategy Working Group and Cabinet.

iv) Procedures for ensuring safety of officers and members at Licensing and Planning committees. The working group did not feel this was an appropriate topic for a Scrutiny review. In addition the matter is the subject of a motion at the next meeting of Full Council so all members will have the opportunity to debate it there.

v) The council's capacity to help with regard to the international refugee crisis. The

working group noted that this was already being addressed by another group in the council.

14. In order that the Scrutiny Committee can be kept up to date with latest developments in important areas of council work, an additional standing item has been introduced on the committee agenda – Invited Reports from the Executive. This will give Cabinet Members, at the invitation of the committee, the opportunity to brief them on important work in their areas such as the Local Plan and Devolution.

15. With regard to the suggestion about reviewing the cabinet system, the Chairman of the committee has indicated he will be writing to the Constitution Working Group to ask what plans it has to keep the system under review.

Risk Analysis

16.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The committee is unable to agree topics for the work programme	1 – there is a broad range of suggested topics	3 – the Scrutiny Committee would have a light work programme for forthcoming meetings and bring little benefit to the council	The working group appointed by the committee has considered in detail all suggestions and its recommendations are based on where it believes the committee can add value

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

List of suggested topics

Planning

Item	Note	Next Steps
Review the failure of the local plan and establish why planning appeals “with no legal basis of defence” are being turned down by the Inspectors	The previous Local Plan was dealt with by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10/09/15	Place on hold - wait for the Secretary of State decision on Elsenham
Review strategic planning systems to ascertain future infrastructure needs		Being progressed by PPWG.
Establish systems to ensure appropriate section 106 contributions are made when a new housing development is planned with particular reference to obligations and to outline, detailed and delivery stages.		Ask an officer to present a report on S106 and CILS at a future committee meeting
Section 106 schemes has the Council used this wisely? Should we adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy?		As above – report on S106 & CILS
Analyse the actual financial contribution of developers compared to what UDC is entitled to demand		As above – report on S106 & CILS
Evaluate planning officers' use of the 5 year land supply rule	Planning Advisory Service report noted the Inspector said the council's approach was robust	PPWG is looking at the issue. In addition, officers have recently amended text included in planning applications to

Item	Note	Next Steps
		improve clarity..
Identify whether the strategic target % of “affordable housing” is actually being achieved in practice	<p>Potential conflict/overlap with the following CABLE project:</p> <p><u>Delivering more housing</u> The devolution prospectus is looking for an accelerated rate of housing completions. Changes to Right to Buy legislation may have implications for the Council’s HRA business plan and for the delivery and retention of an affordable housing stock. Some councils are looking at entering the private rented housing market as a means of income generation and avoiding RTB issues. What is the best way of co-ordinating our approach to these?</p>	On hold for now. May be resurrected if Housing Act goes through
Affordable housing provision of – how effective has the Council been?	<p>Potential conflict/overlap with the following CABLE project:</p> <p><u>Delivering more housing</u> The devolution prospectus is looking for an accelerated rate of housing completions. Changes to Right to Buy legislation may have implications for the Council’s HRA business plan and for the delivery and retention of an affordable housing stock. Some councils are looking at entering the private rented housing market as a means of income generation and</p>	As above

Item	Note	Next Steps
	avoiding RTB issues. What is the best way of co-ordinating our approach to these?	
Evaluate the controls in place to ensure that developers are not able to mislead the Council, and the public, with inaccurate statements, figures, and reports etc. that are to their own advantage, especially where large financial gains can be made		Put the following planning items on hold for now, with recognition there are issues that the committee may want to return to in the future
Evaluate the methods used to assess sustainability in planning applications: the KPIs; scoring and weighting system leading to an objective assessment capable of being audited; consistency of a sustainability assessment system applied across all planning applications		On hold – as above
Evaluate the implementation of the Secretary of State's requirement for the cumulative assessment of air quality impact of developments		On hold – as above
Evaluate the effectiveness of the Air Quality Management		The council will be consulting on a new action plan in early 2016.
Building Control function - with a small and ageing workforce what is its future?		There will be a cabinet decision in March. Potential for pre-scrutiny at meeting in Feb

Item	Note	Next Steps
		(or reserve date in Jan)

Enforcement

Item	Note	Next Steps
Evaluate the methods and effectiveness of planning enforcement	<p><u>Enforcement – what do the public want and are we set up to respond?</u> No Council in the world ever does enough enforcement, and if it does it is accused of being over-zealous and has to back off. Most of our enforcement is done by the enforcement team which takes guidance from professional staff in other departments. The Council is guided by statute which often limits its power. Are public expectations realistic? How can this be altered? What influence can we have over primary legislation? Are we going about enforcement the right way?</p>	<p>Scoping report to November meeting to agree terms of reference.</p> <p>Suggestions to be included in the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational chart showing how enforcement works, which departments feed in, how decisions are taken on what to enforce • Which other agencies are responsible for elements of enforcement; what service agreements/protocols are in place to ensure other agencies deliver <p>Report on Enforcement has now gone to Cabinet, this will be forwarded on to Scrutiny alongside scoping report</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
<p>Scrutiny of the enforcement process to review its aims, its successes and whether it is achieving what is expected of it by the council and public.</p>	<p><u>Enforcement – what do the public want and are we set up to respond?</u> No Council in the world ever does enough enforcement, and if it does it is accused of being over-zealous and has to back off. Most of our enforcement is done by the enforcement team which takes guidance from professional staff in other departments. The Council is guided by statute which often limits its power. Are public expectations realistic? How can this be altered? What influence can we have over primary legislation? Are we going about enforcement the right way?</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Scrutiny of taxi licensing enforcement to establish whether the council deals with the suspension, revocation and non-renewal of drivers' licenses in an effective but fair manner.</p>	<p><u>Enforcement – what do the public want and are we set up to respond?</u> No Council in the world ever does enough enforcement, and if it does it is accused of being over-zealous and has to back off. Most of our enforcement is done by the enforcement team which takes guidance from professional staff in other departments. The Council is guided by statute which often limits its power. Are public expectations realistic? How can this be altered? What influence can we have over primary legislation? Are</p>	<p>As above. Taxi licensing enforcement can be included in wider review.</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
	we going about enforcement the right way?	

Waste and Recycling

Item	Note	Next Steps
<p>Review waste collection: since January, 2015, LAs are obliged to collect paper, glass, plastic and metals in separate collections (and also food separately) unless it is not technically, environmentally or economically practicable. UDC claims this is not economically practicable so is ignoring this obligation</p>	<p>Potential conflict/overlap with the following CABLE project:</p> <p><u>Refuse Service – future delivery models</u> Our refuse service operates on a 4 day week with single pass collections. Food is collected weekly and recyclables/non recyclables on alternate weeks. It is a very efficient service. The vehicles are half way through their working life. Thinking about the effect of housing growth on demand for the service how can we improve efficiency? What level of service is appropriate?</p> <p>Trade waste service discussed at Scrutiny Committee 29/04/14</p>	<p>Additional information::</p> <p>The Waste Strategy Working group met on 9 February 2015 to discuss a report about compliance with dry waste regulations in relation to separate collections of dry recyclables.</p> <p>The Director of Public Services informed members that Waste Regulations stated authorities should collect dry recycling separately, unless it could be demonstrated why this would not be technically, economically or environmentally practicable to do so. The Council currently collected dry recycling on a co-mingled basis. An assessment was attached to the report which concluded that the Council's current</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>arrangements were more beneficial to collecting dry recycling separately.</p> <p>Find the Technical, economical, environmental practicability assessment (TEEP) here: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-tNd9QU7xs0LVVNME9abThfSiA</p> <p>Group Report can be found here: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-tNd9QU7xs0Q2RBajdrNG9aSWM</p> <p>It was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that it approves the TEEP Assessment.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed on 17 February 2015, see minutes here: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-tNd9QU7xs0dTB1ZklSTVpldjg</p> <p>Working Group satisfied that this issue has been considered by the council.</p>
<p>To review the operations of the recycling and waste collection scheme to assess its success and how it might be enhanced to improve its environmental benefit, be made more cost-effective and meet residents'</p>	<p>Potential conflict/overlap with the following CABLE project:</p> <p><u>Refuse Service – future delivery models</u> Our refuse service operates on a 4 day week with</p>	<p>On hold</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
service expectations.	<p>single pass collections. Food is collected weekly and recyclables/non recyclables on alternate weeks. It is a very efficient service. The vehicles are half way through their working life. Thinking about the effect of housing growth on demand for the service how can we improve efficiency? What level of service is appropriate?</p> <p>Trade waste service discussed at Scrutiny Committee 29/04/14</p>	

Finance-related

Item	Note	Next Steps
Establish whether the UDC budget is over-reliant on NHB and what known risks the financial reserves of the Council are based on		<p>The autumn statement is on 25 November 2015.</p> <p>For 17 November Scrutiny meeting, budget report will cover NHB issues</p>
New Homes Bonus- What difference has this made to Uttlesford? Are there any lessons for the future? Impact of ward councillors		As above

having an allocation?		
Council tax arrears- process of collecting- how effective?		On hold

Essex County Council

Item	Note	Next Steps
Review the effectiveness of co-operation between UDC and ECC Highways in achieving action on highway work and advice on planning applications and planning policy	<p>Highways Strategic Partnership presented to Scrutiny Committee 03/09/13</p> <p>A separate agenda item at the same meeting covered Highways responses to planning consultations</p>	<p>No info received from any other authority that their Scrutiny Committees are looking at, or planning to look at, this issue.</p> <p>Working group suggests a report to discuss Planning relationship with ECC, particularly in regards to Highways and Education.</p> <p>In addition officers will raise this at the next meeting of the Essex Scrutiny Officers Network</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
Council's liaison with Essex Highways - many of our problems relate to the state of our roads. (potholes, traffic issues, etc) I am often asked to contact Highways, which I am pleased to do but communication between UDC and Essex may be able to be improved in order to get things done quicker.	Highways Strategic Partnership presented to Scrutiny Committee 03/09/13 A separate agenda item at the same meeting covered Highways responses to planning consultations	As above
Review the effectiveness of co-operation between UDC and ECC Highways in achieving action on highway work and advice on planning applications and planning policy.	Highways Strategic Partnership presented to Scrutiny Committee 03/09/13 A separate agenda item at the same meeting covered Highways responses to planning consultations	As above
The planning relationship with Essex Highways	Highways Strategic Partnership presented to Scrutiny Committee 03/09/13A separate agenda item at the same meeting covered Highways responses to planning consultations	As above
Review the relationship between UDC and ECC: examine why school places have not been properly planned for, and why Highways fails to take data into account thereby producing wrong assessments		Working group requested further information and the following comments were received from the council's Planning Policy Team Leader: "General point is that the Council is in the role of a co-ordinator and facilitator and has to rely to a large extent on the statutory

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>bodies and providers – we cannot bypass them because they are the responsible bodies. If we want a second opinion then the Council can always commission an external consultant. The Council has taken this approach in relation to transport and is in the process of appointing a transport consultant. For schools we are already working with ECC and we understand that they will be supplying an extensive response to the Issues and Options consultation which should help us with our decision-making going forward.</p> <p>“All infrastructure will need to be addressed through an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which will set out what infrastructure is required, when it will be required, who will be responsible for delivering it, and how it will be funded. It should also set out trigger points. More certainty is needed for the short-term plan (5 years). The IDP will be a live document and should be reviewed annually.</p> <p>“Infrastructure planning poses a potential risk to the overall Local Plan timetable because the Council is dependent on third party</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>providers to obtain the reassurances it needs to satisfy an inspector at Examination in Public.”</p> <p>Working group decided report re relationship as detailed earlier in document</p>
Quiet Lanes – expansion of/how effective/desirable?		Support for the potential of looking at this issue sometime in 2016. Scoping Report and background info to be prepared at a future date

Other

Item	Note	Next Steps
Review the procedure for ensuring safety of officers and members involved with 'contentious' applications at the Licensing		Working Group decided not appropriate for scrutiny

Item	Note	Next Steps
and Planning Committees		
Analyse why objections are ignored after public consultations	Source information from Planning Policy Team Leader	<p>Comments received as follows:</p> <p>“Consultation responses are all published on the Consultation Portal. The comments received are all put together into a Report of Representations which sets out who has responded and what the issues raised were. If the same issues were raised by more than one consultee then these are grouped. Officers then prepare responses to the issues raised, and undertake further technical work or modify the draft documents as necessary. This is set out in a further report to the Planning Policy Working Group as soon as it is complete. How long this process takes is dependent upon the number of responses raised and the complexity of the issues.</p> <p>“Finally, the Council is required to prepare a Consultation Statement under Regulation 22 of the Local Planning Regulations 2012, setting out for the Planning Inspector at Examination a record of the main issues raised and how these have been taken into account.</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>“This is addressed in the Statement of Community Involvement and the Engagement Strategy.”</p> <p>Working Group requested standing item on Scrutiny agenda for Cabinet members to provide update on Local Plan and other matters.</p>
<p>Initial investigation into the council's capacity for helping to address the international refugee crisis and what organisations or individuals would work with the council to give aid for people in need of shelter and support.</p>	<p>The matter may be settled at the extraordinary council meeting on Wednesday, 16 September</p>	<p>This is already being addressed. A Working Group has been established</p>
<p>Community Engagement – how should the Council communicate with the community? Does Uttlesford Life serves a useful purpose? What affect does existing community engagement have upon UDC policy making? Is there a case for decentralisation of decision making?</p>	<p>Potential conflict/overlap with the task and finish group chaired by Cllr Paul Davies set out through the Constitution Working Group</p>	<p>Await findings of Constitution Working Group sub-group</p>
<p>Review of the Cabinet system? Is there a case for a return to the committee system?</p>		<p>The following information requested by Working Group:</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>The Constitution Working Group carried out a review of the effectiveness of the Cabinet system in July 2014 and presented a report to Full Council on 21 October 2014.</p> <p>The group concluded that there was no need to change anything now and the newly elected council in May 2015 may wish to examine the system of governance in operation at a later date.</p> <p>However the review found that some members felt disconnected from the decision making process so therefore it was concluded that better scrutiny is key to enhanced member engagement with the cabinet system.</p> <p>This didn't mean that Scrutiny Committee is not working properly, it is merely felt that wider opportunity to scrutinise Council policy well before a decision is made would be valuable, by bringing forward reports at a much earlier stage. This would require considerable cultural shift across the organisation from officers to members at all levels, see further details outlined in the report at https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-</p>

Item	Note	Next Steps
		<p>tNd9QU7xs0ZjRXWVhnTXpHMHc</p> <p>Full Council Minutes can be found: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-tNd9QU7xs0a0ZxTWhIMjJTbDg</p> <p>Chairman to write to Constitution Working Group</p>
Review the relationship between UDC and NEPP	Suggested by Cllr Dean at Working Group meeting	Added to list for committee consideration
Devolution	Suggested by Cllr Light at Working Group meeting	Working Group recommends this can be dealt with through new standing agenda item

Work Programme 2015/16

Date	17 November 2015	09 February 2016	15 March 2016	03 May 2016
Standard agenda items	Consideration of any decisions called in	Consideration of any decisions called in	Consideration of any decisions called in	Consideration of any decisions called in
	Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee	Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee	Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee	Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee
	Invited Reports from the Executive	Invited Reports from the Executive	Invited Reports from the Executive	Invited Reports from the Executive
	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Scrutiny Work Programme Scrutiny Working Group – Provide update on the suggested topics for scrutiny review Review and agree list of recommendations	Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Work Programme	Scrutiny Work Programme
Agenda items	Budget Process – Preparatory Report and Briefing. <i>To include explanation of Autumn Statement, NHB update, results of budget consultation</i>	Budget	LCTS 2017/18 – Scheme parameters and consultation.	2015/16 Scrutiny review and forward plan
	Results of the LCTS consultation	LCTS 2017/18 – Scoping Report.	Year End scrutiny report	
	Enforcement Review – Scoping Report.	Enforcement Review		
	Draft Air Quality Action Plan			

Committee: Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item

Date: 17 November 2015

9

Title: Budget 2016/17 Overview

Author: Adrian Webb
Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Item for decision

Summary

1. At its meeting on 9 February 2016, the Scrutiny Committee will be invited to comment on detailed proposals for the 2016/17 budget, ahead of consideration by the Cabinet on 16 February and determination by the Full Council on 25 February.
2. This report provides an overview of the budget setting process and the documentation that will be coming forward for review.
3. The Scrutiny Committee's role is to provide an independent endorsement of the proposals prior to consideration by Cabinet, or to suggest alternatives. This is ordinarily an apolitical process; alternative budget proposals from Opposition Members should be formulated away from the Scrutiny process and presented to Cabinet and Full Council at the appropriate time.
4. The report also includes the results of the recent budget consultation and explains in more detail the Council reliance on New Homes Bonus (NHB).
5. There is also a section on Business Rates retention and early thoughts on what the Autumn Statement may contain.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that
 - a) Members provide feedback on the outcome of the consultation, New Homes Bonus reliance and Business Rates retention for inclusion in the Cabinet report for the 2016/17 Budget Strategy.

Financial Implications

7. None.

Background Papers

8. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Public consultation and business ratepayers consultation is carried out as part of the budget process.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the budget process.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	It is a legal requirement to produce a balanced budget.
Sustainability	Budgets must be drawn up in the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	Some budget proposals may affect staff e.g. efficiency savings requiring different ways of working.

Budget setting process and timetable

9. The 2016/17 budget relates to the financial year that will run from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. The Full Council meeting on 25 February will set the budget, taking into account recommendations from the Cabinet. The Scrutiny Committee will have an opportunity to review the budget proposals before the Cabinet determines its recommendations.
10. It would be usual at this round of meetings for Scrutiny to be looking at the draft Budget Strategy for 2016/17 which would normally include the Medium term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Reserves Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy. However due to the Autumn Statement being made on 25 November and the likelihood of significant and challenging financial issues arising following the announcement it has not been possible to prepare this document for this meeting.
11. This report will cover the following key areas as we have them at the moment
 - a) Budget timetable and reports to expect
 - b) Budget papers for consideration by Members
 - c) Budget consultation outcomes
 - d) New Homes Bonus
 - e) Business Rates Retention
 - f) Autumn Statement

Budget timetable and reports to expect

12. The following are the key steps taken to draw up the budget:

July 2015	Public consultation carried out
November 2015	Briefing for Scrutiny Committee (this report)
Late November 2015	Financial forecasts updated
December 2015	Financial Outlook and 2016/17 Budget Strategy approved by the Cabinet taking into consideration any guidance from this Scrutiny meeting Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement released by DCLG Business Ratepayers consultation initiated
January 2016	Finalisation of budget proposals Confirmation of Local Government Finance Settlement
February 2016	Formal consideration of budget proposals by Members; Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council
March 2016	Council Tax bills issued
1 April 2016	Financial year commences

Budget papers for consideration by Members

13. Below is a summary of the separate components of the budget papers and suggestions for the types of issues the Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider. These suggestions are neither compulsory nor exhaustive.

14. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Summary

- a) Deals with budgets for council housing only, which by law are kept in a separate ringfenced account, separate from other council services.
- b) Expenditure on council housing is funded by rents and service charges payable by council tenants.
- c) HRA finances underwent substantial reform on 1 April 2012. Negative housing subsidy was abolished, replaced by the Council having to take on a share of the national housing debt. The result is that the HRA has significant levels of revenue headroom in its budget.

- d) The HRA has a 30-year business plan which sets out plans to maintain and improve housing stock and provide services to tenants, and plans for funding new council houses. The business plan allocates the revenue headroom and ensures that the debt is repaid within the 30-year period.
- e) HRA budgets are discussed by the Tenants Forum and Housing Board prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Do the proposals have the support of council tenants?
- Have the potential impacts of the Housing Bill been properly accounted for?
- Are there clear plans for the use of revenue headroom that deliver useful outcomes within reasonable timescales?

15. Treasury Management

Summary

- a) Including monies collected for other organisations, over £125m flows in and out of the Council's bank accounts each year. Inevitably, temporary cash surpluses arise.
- b) In addition, the Council holds financial reserves, including its own balances, and S106 funds.
- c) Treasury management is the process by which these cash flows and balances are managed. The prime objective is to ensure security of funds, secondary priorities are to ensure sufficient liquidity to enable commitments to be met, and capacity to earn income on the balances held.
- d) The Council is required to approve a Treasury Management strategy that ensures appropriate risk management including a safe approach to investing surplus funds.
- e) Treasury management strategy also governs how long term borrowing is used to fund capital expenditure.
- f) The strategy is accompanied by mandatory "prudential indicators" which are technical measures of the affordability and sustainability of the Council's borrowings and investments.
- g) The Council is advised in its treasury management activity by leading independent experts, Arlingclose Ltd.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Is the strategy consistent with advice provided by Arlingclose?
- Does the strategy ensure that the Council's exposure to risk is appropriate and properly managed? Has the right balance been struck between safeguarding funds and earning a return?
- What do the prudential indicators say about the appropriateness of the Council's plans?

16. Capital Programme

Summary

- a) Capital expenditure is spending on schemes or assets that have long term value to the Council and the community. Examples include council housing, vehicles, IT systems, building improvements, or grants to outside bodies and individuals such as disabled adaptations.
- b) Capital expenditure is financed by contributions from the HRA or General Fund, capital receipts (sale of Council assets), external funding such as S106 contributions or government grant, or by borrowing.
- c) The Capital Programme sets out capital expenditure plans for the next 5 years, together with details of how this is to be financed.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Do the proposed items in the Programme provide tangible outcomes and value for money?
- How do we ensure that capital grants given to outside bodies and individuals achieve the intended outcomes?
- Are the financing methods appropriate, and built into revenue budgets?

17. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

Summary

- a) The MTFS relates to the General Fund (all services except Council Housing) and sets out forecasts for the next five years.
- b) It includes estimates of income and expenditure, and quantifies the extent of any surpluses or deficits anticipated during the five year period.
- c) The MTFS sets out in outline the Council's strategy for addressing deficits, or using surpluses, in order to ensure that Corporate Plan priorities are underpinned by sound finances.

- d) The key reason for having an MTFS is to anticipate potential difficulties long before they arise and ensure that robust plans are in place to address them. This is of particular importance because of expected future cuts in Government funding of local government.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Are the assumptions used to build the forecasts reasonable?
- What would happen if actual events differed from the assumptions?
- Does the Council have a robust plan for addressing any deficits forecasted?
- Are plans for the use of any surpluses prudent, sustainable and good value for money?

18. Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves

Summary

- a) By law, the Council must set its General Fund budget and Council Tax having given due regard to advice from its chief financial officer (CFO) on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves.
- b) The report will summarise the key risks in the Council budget, and the assumptions that are most volatile. This will be translated into advice about the minimum safe level of contingency reserves that should be maintained, and whether other reserves are needed to meet expected pressures in the coming years.
- c) The Secretary of State has powers to intervene if the CFO's advice is disregarded by Members, in the event of inappropriately low levels of reserves being maintained.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Are the risks clearly explained?
- Is the advice about minimum safe contingency reserves proportionate to the risks involved?
- Is the level of reserves held by the Council appropriate?

19. General Fund Budget and Council Tax

Summary

- a) The General Fund covers budgets for all Council services except council housing.

- b) General Fund expenditure is mostly funded from fees & charges and Government grant. The balance is funded by Council Tax. By law the Council must set a balanced budget.
- c) The report will set out in detail proposed budgets for all General Fund services, proposed fees & charges, and a Council Tax resolution.

Possible issues for consideration by Scrutiny:

- Is the proposed budget consistent with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the CFO's advice on the level of reserves that should be maintained?
- Is the budget consistent with the Budget Strategy approved by the Cabinet?
- Have consultation responses been properly taken into account?
- Does the budget support the Corporate Plan?
- Are proposed budget growth items (service investment) justified with clear outcomes that provide value for money?
- Are proposed budget reductions (efficiency savings or service reductions) reasonable and consequences properly thought out?
- Is the proposal regarding Council Tax reasonable?

20. Scrutiny Committee Members are invited to familiarise themselves with the Council's existing Budget Book that can be found on the Council's website at: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/finance (see area second from bottom on the right of the webpage).

21. At all times Adrian Webb, the Chief Finance Officer shall be pleased to meet with Members individually or in groups to discuss any aspect of the Council's finances.

Budget consultation outcomes

22. For the previous four years the budget consultation has been based on the key actions contained within the Corporate Plan. However for 2016/17 the approach to this consultation was changed to try to improve the response rate.

23. In addition the council widened the scope of the consultation, using three streams

- a) A telephone survey undertaken by a professional market research company who contacted a profiled sample of Uttlesford residents. The company was commissioned to deliver 500 responses and in fact exceeded that with 533 responses.

- b) Open public consultation using an online questionnaire. Paper copies were also available at council office reception desks. In addition a face to face consultation was also carried out with staff available to answer questions at Great Dunmow Carnival and at Saffron Walden and Thaxted markets. This received 79 responses.
- c) The 450 members of the Uttlesford Citizens Panel. This received 208 responses.

24. This gives a total response of 820 compared to 196 in 2014.

25. The full analysis of the budget consultation is included as Appendix One. This report contains an executive summary, precis of the combined results of all the survey streams and detailed results from each of the telephone, public and panel consultations. Very briefly, the people of Uttlesford would like their council to concentrate spending on collecting bins, planning how the district develops, sweeping the streets, supporting the elderly, working with police and preventing drugs use. They would rather the council spent less on providing car parks and funding Saffron Walden Museum. For next year they are of the opinion that Council Tax, or at least the Uttlesford portion of it, should remain at the same level.

New Homes Bonus

26. The New Homes Bonus scheme is a subsidy payable based on the number of new homes brought into use during a 12 month period. This was shown in the February budget papers as

MTFS PERIOD								
	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
2011/12 award	£0.714m	£0.714m	£0.714m	£0.714m				
2012/13 award	£0.534m	£0.534m	£0.534m	£0.534m	£0.534m			
2013/14 award	£0.794m	£0.794m	£0.794m	£0.794m	£0.794m	£0.794m		
2014/15 award		£0.835m	£0.835m	£0.835m	£0.835m	£0.835m	£0.835m	
2015/16 award			£0.721m	£0.721m	£0.721m	£0.721m	£0.721m	£0.721m
2016/17 provisional				£0.708m	£0.708m	£0.708m	£0.708m	£0.708m
2017/18 provisional					£0.93m	£0.93m	£0.93m	£0.93m
2018/19 provisional						£1.435m	£1.435m	£1.435m
2019/20 provisional							£1.441m	£1.441m
2020/21 provisional								£1.051m
TOTAL NHB	£2.042m	£2.877m	£3.598m	£4.306m	£4.522m	£5.423m	£6.070m	£6.286m

27. As can be seen it is a rolling six year scheme.

28. Also presented to the February 2015 Cabinet meeting was a summary of the budget position

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gross service expenditure	33,829	33,148	30,820	26,316	21,895	20,380
Gross service income	-24,228	-23,274	-20,255	-15,313	-10,438	-8,441
Demand growth	0	50	100	150	200	250
Net service expenditure	9,600	9,924	10,665	11,153	11,657	12,189
Capital financing costs	3,454	1,366	1,429	1,546	1,540	1,509
Pension fund deficit	102	102	502	527	552	577
Recharge to HRA	-1,372	-1,300	-1,300	-1,300	-1,300	-1,300
Other corporate items	-50	-50	-50	-50	-50	-50
Total budget	11,733	10,042	11,246	11,876	12,399	12,925
Funding						
Business Rates Retention	-1,303	-1,329	-1,356	-1,383	-1,411	-1,439
Council Tax Freeze Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0
Collection Fund Balance	-89	0	0	0	0	0
Section 106 Funding	-10	0	0	0	0	0
Formula Grant	-1,234	-925	-620	-300	0	0
New Homes Bonus	-3,598	-4,306	-4,522	-5,423	-6,070	-6,286
Total Funding	-6,234	-6,560	-6,498	-7,106	-7,481	-7,725
Net Operating Expenditure	5,499	3,482	4,748	4,770	4,918	5,200
Movement in Reserves	-846	-11	-86	-197	-273	-60
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT	4,653	3,471	4,662	4,573	4,645	5,140
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	-4,653	-4,736	-4,904	-5,106	-5,373	-5,603
In year surplus (-) / deficit	0	-1,265	-242	-533	-728	-463

29. The key part of this table are the two lines 'New Homes Bonus' and 'In Year Surplus' which when shown as below effectively indicate the reliance the council has on NHB.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	4,306	4,522	5,423	6,070	6,286
In year surplus	1,265	242	533	728	463
Council Reliance on NHB	3,041	4,280	4,890	5,342	5,823

30. As can be seen as the year's progress the council becomes ever more reliant on NHB.

Business Rates Retention

31. In October it was announced that by 2020/21 councils would be able to retain 100% of Business Rates collected. Clearly with an international airport within its boundaries it seemed Uttlesford could benefit from this.

32. However at the time of the announcement the press release contained two interesting comments

- a) 'and local government will take on new responsibilities'
- b) 'Local government will of course also need to contribute to fiscal consolidation over this Parliament'

Clearly there is no new money for this.

33. On 12 October the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Greg Clark, gave a written statement to the House of Commons in which some more 'hints' were given about the scheme. The key comments were:

- a) **"As well as phasing out the local government grant from Whitehall, these new powers will come with new responsibilities to ensure the reforms are fiscally neutral."** We assume this fiscally neutral to the government. This confirms that local government will have to take on new burdens/ services, as well as losing grant funding, in return for 100% retention.
- b) **"Redistribution between councils will remain important, to reflect the different need of different authorities."** This implies that top slicing of Business Rates will remain for those authorities like Uttlesford who collect high amounts of Business Rates.
- c) **"...we will consider the responsiveness of the system to future changes in relative needs and resources, whilst maintaining a strong incentive for authorities to grow their local economies."** This may mean Uttlesford will not be able to keep Business Rates growth in its entirety.

- d) **“We will also consider how risk and business rates volatility can be better managed and how to protect authorities against significant falls in income.”** This means that a safety net arrangement will most likely be put in place.

34. The full statement can be found at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-10-12/HCWS221/>

35. This statement does not rule out the changes starting in 2016/17 but does imply it could be a very similar system to the one currently in place.

Autumn Statement

36. The Autumn Statement, which is also referred to as the Spending Review, will be announced on 25 November. Like many such announcements the details will emerge over the days following it.

37. The big questions for Uttlesford are

- a) At what speed will Business Rates Retention be introduced?
- b) Is this the end for NHB? If so;
- c) At what speed will NHB be phased out?
- d) What additional responsibilities will UDC be expected to take on?
- e) Will it all add up?

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
A detailed risk assessment shall accompany the budget proposals. There are no specific risks at this stage.			

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Uttlesford District Council

Council Spending

A report on the public survey about council spending priorities for the year 2016-17



September 2015



Contents

- 1. Executive summary**
 - Introduction
 - Results summary
 - Results priorities
 - Results priority analysis
- 2. Purpose methodology**
- 3. Survey results, detailed findings**
 - Survey results across all streams
 - Results analysis across all streams
- 4. Appendices –Tables and charts**
 - Open text responses
 - Questionnaire
 - Profiling
 - How rating scores are calculated

1. Executive summary

This is the fifth year that a consultation asking for residents' views on the headline priorities for setting the budget for the approaching financial year has been run. In order to obtain as wide a body of opinion as possible a multi-directional approach has been taken comprising a telephone survey of over 500 residents, online and paper questionnaires and on-the-ground research carried out in a number of the key population centres. A copy of the survey was also included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire.

In a departure from the format of previous years, in which questions were based on high level corporate priorities, the consultation on the direction for spending in 2016-17 concentrated on asking for residents' views on their prerogatives for the future resourcing of specific service areas. An additional question was provided for consultees to comment on the level of Council Tax that Uttlesford District Council should be setting in the coming year.



Uttlesford residents' survey 2015

Preparing the council's budget is a process that takes many months - and it can't be done without the input of the district's residents.

This survey gives you the chance to have your say on what should be the priorities for Uttlesford District Council and what we should spend your council tax on. The results of this consultation will help design the budget for April 2016 to March 2017, which councillors will be asked to approve in February next year.

The closing date for this survey is Thursday 24 September 2015 at 5pm

If you have any queries regarding this questionnaire, please contact the Consultation Team at Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510670 or Email: consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk

Please answer the questions below by ticking in the appropriate boxes.

Q1 Below is a list of services Uttlesford District Council has to provide or has to ensure are provided by another organisation. For each service, please indicate whether you consider it to be a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority. (Please select one option for each service).

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Dealing with noise complaints, air and water quality issues and other environmental health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins (The town or parish councils in Saffron Walden, Dunmow and Stansted are responsible for public litter bins in their areas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results summary

The results for each of the different consultation streams – telephone survey, public consultation and Citizens Panel survey – are being reported separately. This report summary records an overview of these three consultative strands.

Responses from panellists have been analysed using a rating system which weights the options selected by residents. Rating is a system particularly recommended by Snap Surveys following the introduction of Version 11 of their software earlier in 2014. This system is used to collate the majority of the council's general survey work throughout the year and was employed on the analysis of the current Council Spending Survey results.

A rating system¹ is an appropriate analysis tool for the Council Spending Survey since the same area of spending might have been chosen by different respondents at a different level of priority; more weight is thus given to that selection if it is selected as the 'Highest Priority' than if the same spending area is still chosen as priority, but at a lower level. Consequently, a fair analysis is achieved by allocating 3 points to each vote for the 'High Priority', 2 points to each vote for the 'Medium Priority' and 1 point to each vote for the 'Low Priority'. Those offering a 'No Opinion' have been attributed a zero score value reflecting their neutral response to the question.

Uttlesford District Council administers a wide range of services. Many of these must be provided either by the council itself or by another organisation. There is also a portfolio of services which are deemed to be non-statutory, in that the council is not required to offer these facilities but may do so to the benefit of the community. For the purposes of the consultation, residents were asked to comment on statutory services and non-statutory services separately. A final and distinct question sought respondents' views on the level of Council Tax charge that should be levied by the district council in the forthcoming financial year.

¹ See Appendix 4 for an explanation of rating system calculations

The combined results across the three survey strands - the telephone survey, public consultation and Citizens Panel survey - are given below:

Results priorities

Statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins” - (93.78 %)</p> <p>“Planning how the district will develop in the coming decades, including where new housing and businesses will be located” - (86.94 %)</p> <p>“Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy” - (86.47 %)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	<p>Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes” - (60.63 %)</p>

Non-statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required” - (88.63%)</p> <p>“Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe” - (88.01%)</p> <p>“Educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol” - (81.58 %)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	“Running Saffron Walden Museum” - (57.75 %)

Council Tax 2016-17

Headline	Council Tax priority
Headline result	“Keep the amount of council tax the same” – (69.09 %)

Results priority analysis

Previous surveys conducted in 2013 for the 2014-15 budget and in 2014 for the 2015-16 budget were conducted using the priorities within the Council’s long term strategy as promoted in the Corporate Plan. It is therefore difficult to make direct comparisons with opinions given by residents in the current consultation where a different baseline has been applied, though some general observations may be made on trends.

Statutory Services Top Three Priorities:

The headline results from the current piece of market research demonstrate that across the three consultative streams respondents manifested a marked preference for supporting spending on “Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins” with 93.78 % considering this to be a high priority. As one of the principal universal services provided to residents, the collection of waste and recycling represents a consistent concern amongst all consultees. This is broadly in line with the results of the 2015-16 (conducted in 2014) budget survey where the core priority including “maintaining or improving services” was selected as the primary direction of travel for the council’s budgetary provision².

Planning and development formed the headline view for the second highest spending priority. Using the rating system to analyse the results “Planning how the district will develop in the coming decades, including where new housing and businesses

² Cf. *Council Spending. Budget Consultation Results*, September 2014

will be located” scored 86.94% support. This result is perhaps indicative of the continuing interest in the planning process and in particular the formulation of the Local Plan. Although not a noted concern in the 2015-16 (conducted in 2014) budget survey, in 2013, an option (rendered as question C in the survey - “Provide affordable housing for local people through a robust Local Plan”) was returned as a joint second highest priority.

“Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy” was selected by just a very slightly reduced number of respondents (86.47%) to come in as the third of the top priorities. Again, this partly reflects a persistent trend in feedback from previous years when caring for the local transport infrastructure formed the headline view for the second highest spending priority.

Respondents were also offered the option to select a “lowest priority” category of spending to consider where the council should be curtailing resources. Here, some 60.63% were of the opinion that “Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes” should be an area in which savings might be made.

Non-statutory Services Top Three Priorities:

There are a number of services which are provided by Uttlesford District Council for which there is no statutory requirement. These are offered for the better benefit of the local community.

Within the basket of non-statutory services residents considered that “Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required” to be highly important and worthy of future resourcing. This view was supported by an 88.63% majority. The secondary priority - “Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe” (selected by 88.01%) – also reflects a concern with supporting local communities. In previous years this had been covered by the corporate objective towards “Reducing crime and antisocial behaviours in partnership with the police and others”. In the 2015-16 budget survey (conducted in 2014) this was ranked fourth

as the highest priority by those who answered the question. Again in the area of community safety, for 2016-17, 81.58% of people supported the council's work in "Educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol" with such events as 'Crucial Crew' and 'Motorwise'.

Within the non-statutory services "Running Saffron Walden Museum" was rated as the lowest priority.

Council Tax spending direction:

Consultees were also asked to indicate their preference reading the future setting of Council Tax for the forthcoming budget period. For 2016-17, 69.09% were of the opinion that there should be no change in the amount of Council Tax levied by the District Council.

2. Purpose methodology

The council is obliged to consult with the residents of the district when setting the budget for the forthcoming year and the results of this consultation will inform the decisions made by officers and councillors when setting spending for the year April 2016 to March 2017.

In a departure from the format of questions employed in previous years, based on high level corporate priorities, the consultation on the direction for spending in 2016-17 concentrated on asking for residents' views on their prerogatives for the future resourcing of specific service areas.

This is the fifth year that a consultation asking for residents' views on the headline priorities for setting the budget for the approaching financial year has been run. For a number of years the consultation had been run via a single survey distributed

via the council's community newsletter, *Uttlesford Life*. For the 2016-17 budget survey a multi-directional approach was taken comprising a telephone survey of over 500 residents, online and paper questionnaires and on-the-ground research undertaken in a number of the key population centres. A copy of the survey was also included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire.

The consultation was run over the period 7 to 24 September 2015. Respondents were asked to select their highest, mid-range and lowest spending priorities from a list of 11 statutory and 14 non-statutory service options covering the full range of the council's activities. They were also offered the opportunity to indicate a preference for raising, reducing or maintaining the current level of Council Tax levied by the District Council. For profiling purposes they were also invited to include postcode, gender and age data.

The following consultative methods were used, in all cases the same questions were asked:

- Telephone survey undertaken by a professional market research company, NWA Social and Market Research Ltd on behalf of Uttlesford District Council.
- Open public consultation. The survey was promoted on the council's website from 7 to 24 September via an interactive form using the Snap 11 consultation platform. Paper copies were also distributed to the council's main contact points at the Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the CSC in Saffron Walden. A face to face consultation was also carried out with staff on hand to answer questions and to distribute surveys at Great Dunmow Carnival and on Saffron Walden and Thaxted markets.
- The budget 2016-17 questions were also included as part of Uttlesford Voices 11, the half-yearly consultation questionnaire sent out to 450 members of the Uttlesford Citizens Panel.

General promotion was carried out with direct mailings to the members of the Citizens Panel, press releases, exposure via the council's social media channels and prominent half-page advertisements in local papers.

By the close of the consultation period, 533 telephone responses had been registered; 79 submissions had been received from the public; and 208 by members of the Citizens Panel. This represents a significant increase in overall submissions on the previous year when the consultation was available only via *Uttlesford Life* and as an online survey. It should be remembered that not all respondents chose to answer all of the questions and that in a small number cases residents opted to submit a statement rather than selecting any of the stated spending options.

3. Survey results, detailed findings

3.1 Survey results across all streams

The results for each of the different consultation streams – telephone survey, public consultation and Citizens Panel survey – are reported below.

3.1.1 Telephone survey results summary

A telephone survey of 533 residents from across the district was carried out by NWA Social and Market Research Ltd on behalf of Uttlesford District Council

Key results from the survey are as follows:

Statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins” - (93.75%)</p> <p>“Planning how the district will develop in the coming decades, including where new housing and businesses will be located” - (88.19%)</p> <p>“Providing council housing and providing sheltered housing for older people” - (87.94%)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes” - (67.75%)

Non-statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	“Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required” - (91.95%)

	<p>“Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe” - (89.77%)</p> <p>“Educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol” - (84.69%)</p>
--	---

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	“Running Saffron Walden Museum” - (58.72%)

Council Tax 2016-17

Headline	Council Tax priority
Headline result	“Keep the amount of council tax the same” – (71.19%)

3.1.2. Public Survey

An online interactive consultation was available via the council’s website. Paper copies were also distributed to the authority’s main contact points in Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the Saffron Walden CSC where they were available to all visitors. Over 525 copies of the paper survey were distributed at Great Dunmow carnival, Saffron Walden market and Thaxted market. Across all distribution points 77 surveys were submitted.

Key results from the survey are as follows:

Statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins” - (94.02%)</p> <p>“Planning how the district will develop in the coming decades, including where new housing and businesses will be located” - (89.78%)</p> <p>“Providing council housing and providing sheltered housing for older people” - (84.65%)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	<p>Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes” - (58.44%)</p>

Non-statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe” - (83.12%)</p>

	<p>“Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required” - (80.26%)</p> <p>“Providing the Highway Rangers service which carries out small jobs such as keeping road verges tidy through hedge cutting, mowing and strimming, repainting and repairing road signs” - (76.62 %)</p>
--	--

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	“Running Saffron Walden Museum” - (62.04%)

Council Tax 2016-17

Headline	Council Tax priority
Headline result	“Keep the amount of council tax the same” – (60.00%)

3.1.3. Citizens Panel Survey

An online interactive consultation and paper surveys were made available to the 450 registered members of the Uttlesford District Council Citizens Panel. Across all online and paper streams a total of 205 surveys were submitted.

Key results from the survey are as follows:

Statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins” - (93.79%)</p> <p>“Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy” - (85.78%)</p> <p>“Enforcement work including prosecuting people for not paying council tax or council house rent, benefit fraud, fly-tipping” - (83.08%)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes” - (58.58%)

Non-statutory Services

Headline	Spending Area – ranked top three priorities
High priority	<p>“Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe” - (85.26%)</p> <p>“Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required” - (83.09%)</p> <p>“Educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol” - (76.57 %)</p>

Headline	Spending Area – ranked as ‘low priority’ by the most respondents
Low priority	“Running Saffron Walden Museum” - (53.54%)

Council Tax 2016-17

Headline	Council Tax priority
Headline result	“Keep the amount of council tax the same” – (66.84 %)

3.2. Results analysis across all streams

This analysis comments on whether the responses received from telephone respondents are similar or different to those received via other consultation channels. Results are broadly in line with the views of residents across all three consultation streams with only minor variation in feedback rates against the top statutory and non-statutory priorities. As with the public consultation, emptying bins, planning how the district will develop and providing council housing form the three top priorities for statutory services. Members of the Citizens Panel, by contrast, saw sweeping the streets as one of the main priorities, together with enforcement work. Their weighting of these priorities means that overall support for council housing is eclipsed by considerations for cleaner streets across the district.

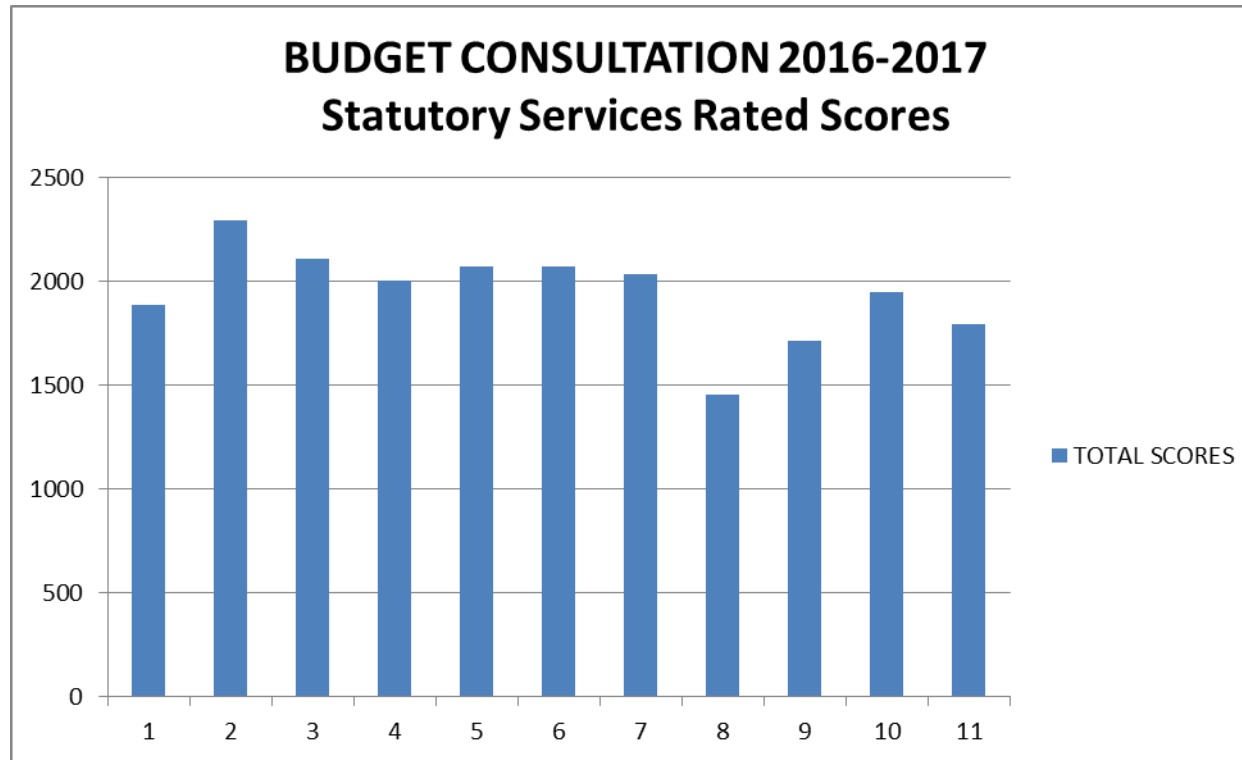
Across the board residents considered running car parks as being the lowest priority form amongst the basket of statutory services.. Response rates varied from 61.75% support for this option from amongst telephone respondents, to 58.44% from the public.

In the overall results, helping older people emerged as the foremost area for non-statutory services. This was ranked in first place by telephone respondents, but as only the second most important service by both the public and panellists. By comparison, members of the Citizens Panel and the public considered working with the police to be of primary importance. In the top three priorities, the public felt that the Highway Ranger service warranted support, whereas telephone interviewees and panellists all agreed that educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol should be a well-resourced area of work.

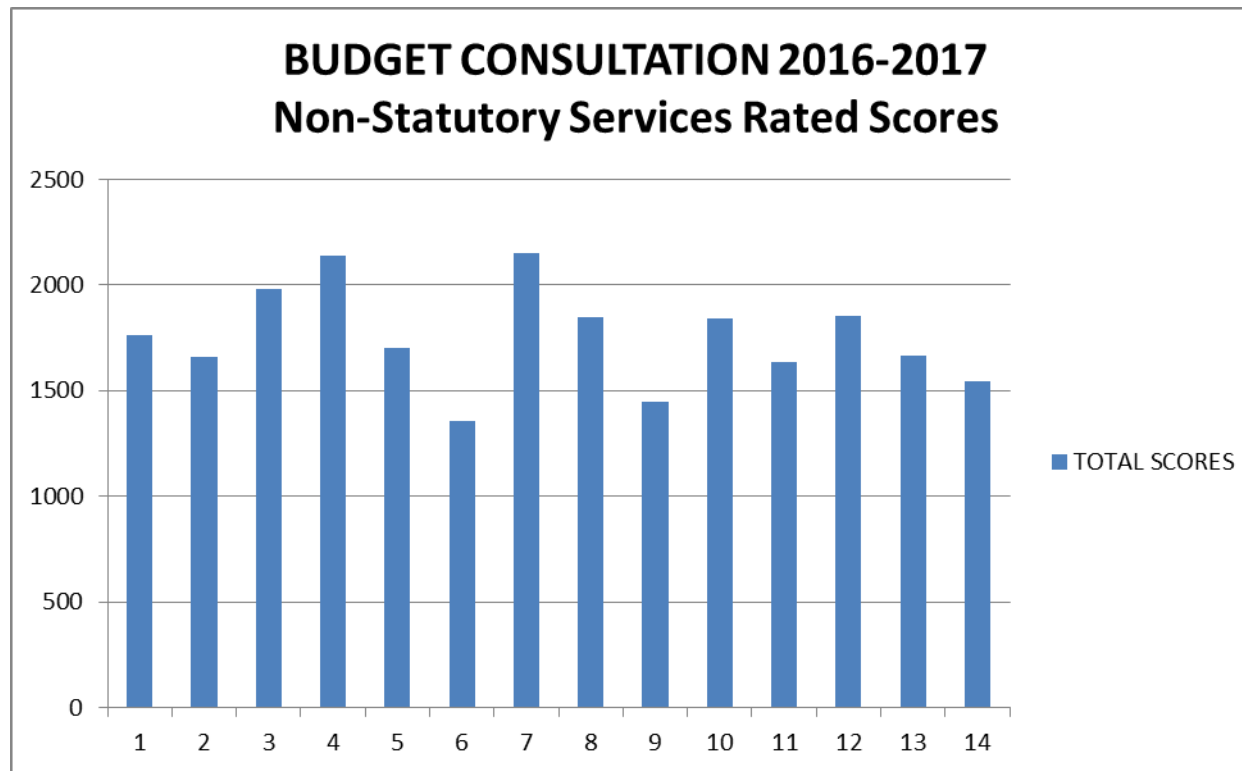
Amongst the non-statutory services there was a universal body of opinion that running Saffron Walden Museum should be considered the lowest priority.

Over the past three years Uttlesford District Council has consistently reduced its share of the council tax bill. Residents were asked for their opinions on the future direction of council tax changing in the district. Universally across all three consultation streams respondents were of the opinion that the District Council's portion of the council tax should remain unchanged in the coming financial year. This opinion was most marked amongst those contacted by telephone with 71.19% of those answering this question opting for a freeze. The public were slightly more reticent with only 60.00% support, whilst amongst members of the Citizens Panel there was support for this course of action by 66.84%. Again amongst panellists, only 16.58% supported an increase in Council Tax with the same percentage, 16.58% viewing a decrease as being preferable. By contrast, 17.89% of telephone respondents supported an increase as against 10.92% who thought a decrease an advisable course of action.

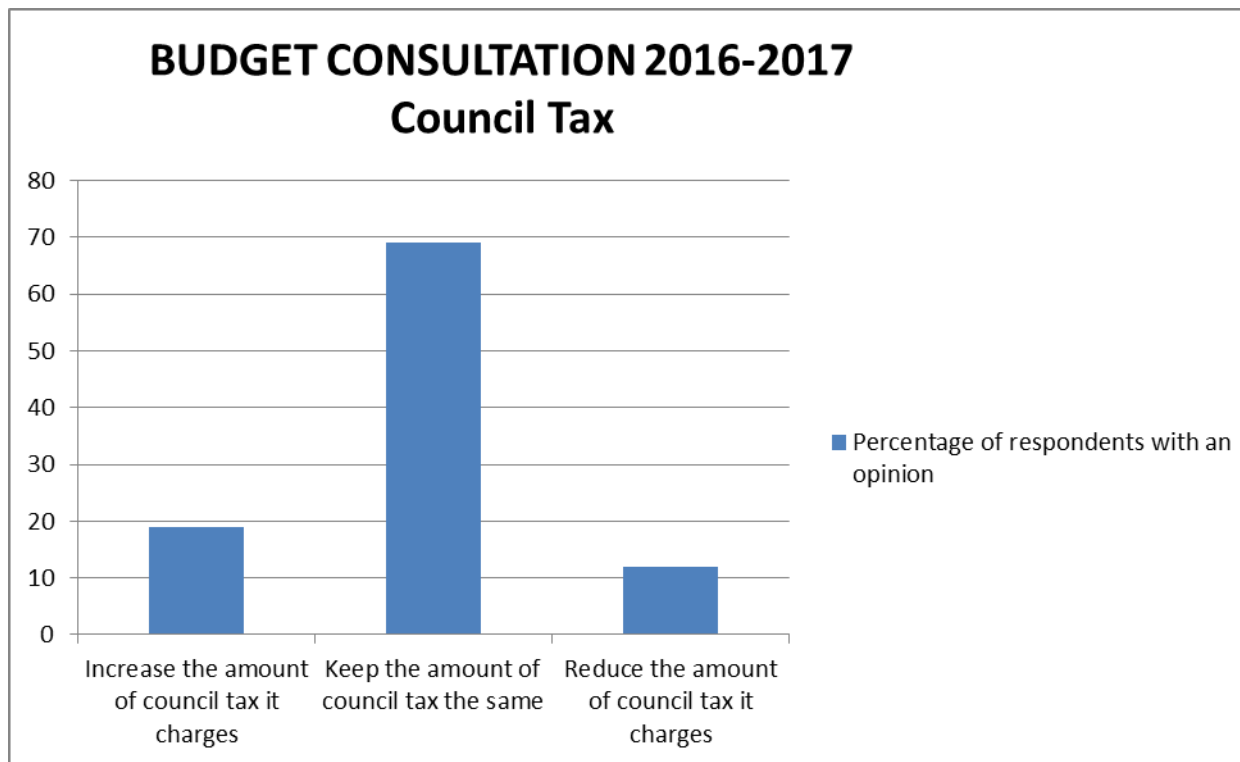
Overall detailed results across all questions



Priority	1-1_Noise	1-2_Bins	1-3_Street_Sweeping	1-4_Planning_Apps	1-5_Development	1-6_Housing	1-7_Enforcement	1-8_Car_Parks	1-9_Tax_Calculation	1-10_Tax_Collection	1-11_License_Inspection
High (response x3)	1098	2028	1524	1392	1590	1524	1428	396	786	1278	945
Medium (response x 2)	718	252	560	550	434	504	552	784	802	602	720
Low (response x1)	72	13	25	59	47	44	56	277	125	68	130
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1888	2293	2109	2001	2071	2072	2036	1457	1713	1948	1795
Potential Score	2391	2445	2439	2394	2382	2412	2424	2403	2364	2385	2415
Priority score (percentage)	78.96%	93.78%	86.47%	83.58%	86.94%	85.90%	83.99%	60.63%	72.46%	81.68%	74.33%

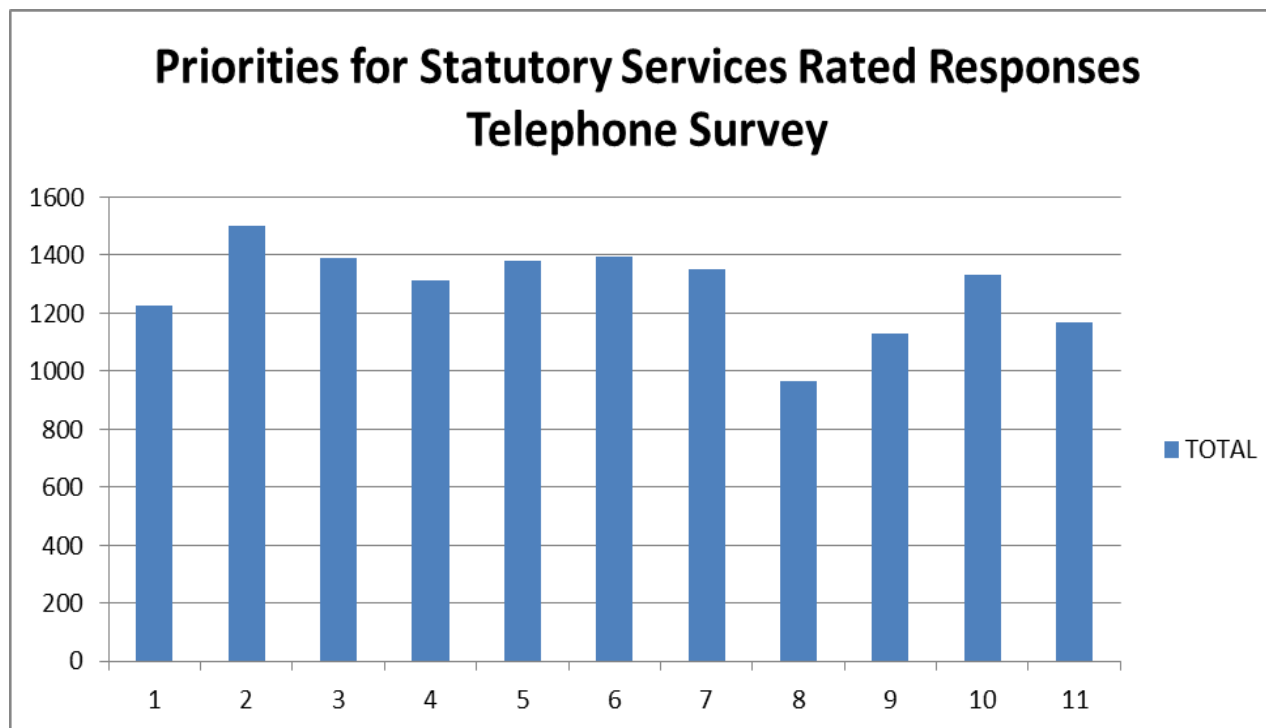


Priority	2-1_Grants	2-2_Health_Classes	2-3_Drug_Education	2-4_Police_Work	2-5_PubHealth_Work	2-6_Museum	2-7_Lifeline_Service	2-8_Day_Centres	2-9_Stray_Animals	2-10_Rejuv_Homes	2-11_Business_Bins	2-12_Highway_Rangers	2-13_Promoting_Businesses	2-14_Listed_Buildings
High (response x3)	852	711	1392	1677	768	336	1689	984	465	1170	720	984	738	531
Medium (response x 2)	780	752	486	418	764	696	432	770	674	520	726	764	748	772
Low (response x1)	131	196	102	41	167	321	30	92	308	154	189	103	180	239
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Score	1763	1659	1980	2136	1699	1353	2151	1846	1447	1844	1635	1851	1666	1542
Potential Score	2415	2427	2427	2427	2415	2343	2427	2415	2400	2412	2376	2439	2400	2406
Priority score (percentage)	73.00%	68.36%	81.58%	88.01%	70.35%	57.75%	88.63%	76.44%	60.29%	76.45%	68.81%	75.89%	69.42%	64.09%

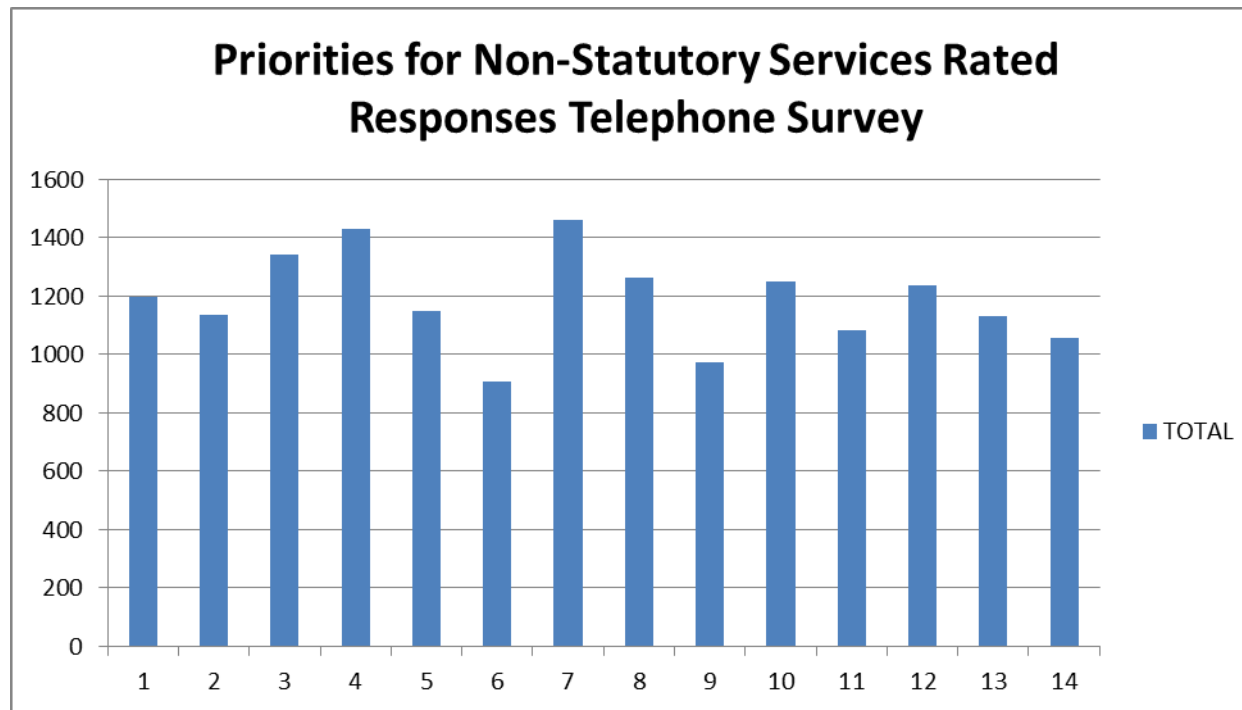


Priority		Counts	Percentage of those with an opinion
Increase the amount of council tax it charges		151	18.90%
Keep the amount of council tax the same		552	69.09%
Reduce the amount of council tax it charges		96	12.02%
No opinion		10	
Total		809	
Total excluding "no opinion"		799	

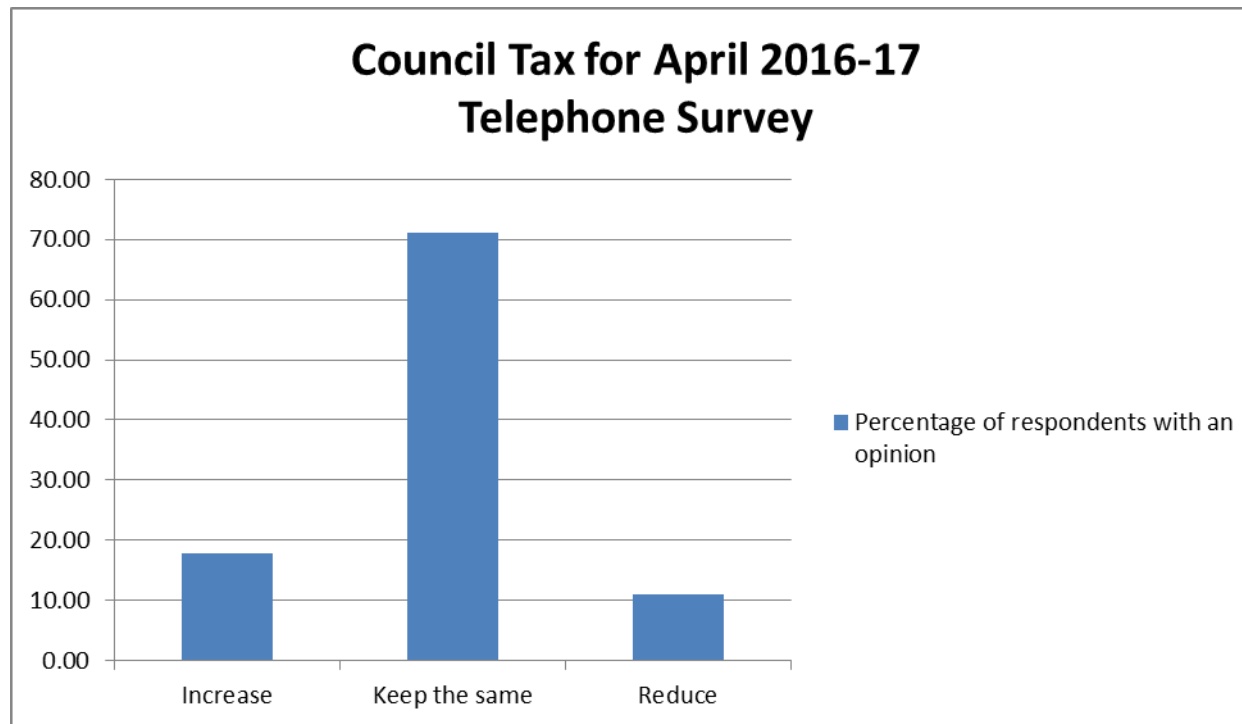
Telephone Survey - detailed results across all questions



Priority	1-1_Noise	1-2_Bins	1-3_Street_Sweeping	1-4_Planning_Apps	1-5_Development	1-6_Housing	1-7_Enforcement	1-8_Car_Parks	1-9_Tax_Calculation	1-10_Tax_Collection	1-11_License_Inspection
High (response x3)	684	1326	1020	936	1092	1056	969	297	537	930	615
Medium (response x 2)	488	164	354	336	262	322	352	494	518	376	470
Low (response x1)	54	9	15	39	27	15	31	176	74	25	83
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1226	1499	1389	1311	1381	1393	1352	967	1129	1331	1168
Potential Score	1578	1599	1596	1557	1566	1584	1590	1566	1536	1569	1569
Priority score (percentage)	77.69%	93.75%	87.03%	84.20%	88.19%	87.94%	85.03%	61.75%	73.50%	84.83%	74.44%

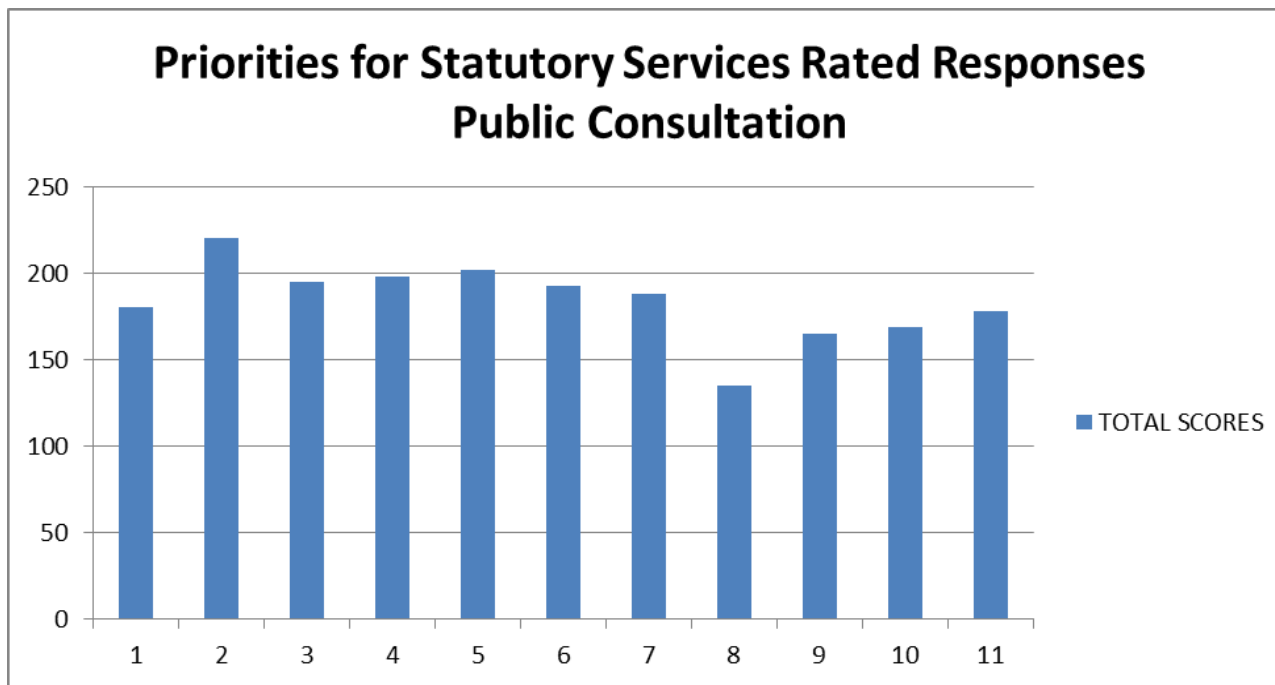


Priority	2-1_Grants	2-2_Health_Classes	2-3_Drug_Education	2-4_Police_Work	2-5_PubHealth_Work	2-6_Museum	2-7_Lifeline_Service	2-8_Day_Centres	2-9_Stray_Animals	2-10_Rejuv_Homes	2-11_Business_Bins	2-12_Highway_Rangers	2-13_Promoting_Businesses	2-14_Listed_Buildings
High (response x3)	630	537	1026	1167	567	228	1236	729	360	837	516	693	540	414
Medium (response x 2)	498	498	262	242	490	482	216	508	416	330	438	482	492	506
Low (response x1)	68	101	56	21	94	199	10	28	198	83	131	60	101	136
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1196	1136	1344	1430	1151	909	1462	1265	974	1250	1085	1235	1133	1056
Potential Score	1581	1587	1587	1593	1584	1548	1590	1575	1578	1581	1566	1596	1581	1581
Priority score (percentage)	75.65%	71.58%	84.69%	89.77%	72.66%	58.72%	91.95%	80.32%	61.72%	79.06%	69.28%	77.38%	71.66%	66.79%

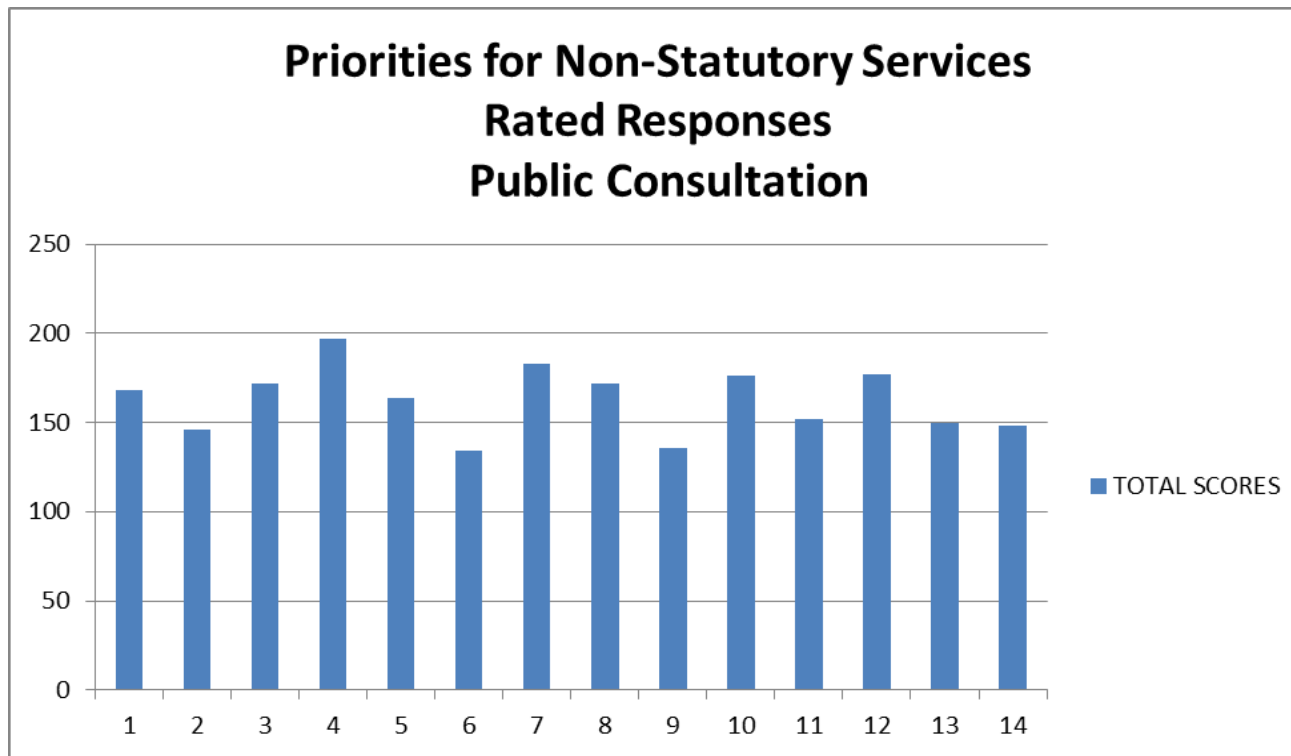


Priority		Counts	Percentage of those with an opinion
Increase the amount of council tax it charges		95	17.89%
Keep the amount of council tax the same		378	71.19%
Reduce the amount of council tax it charges		58	10.92%
No opinion		2	
Total		533	
Total excluding "no opinion"		531	

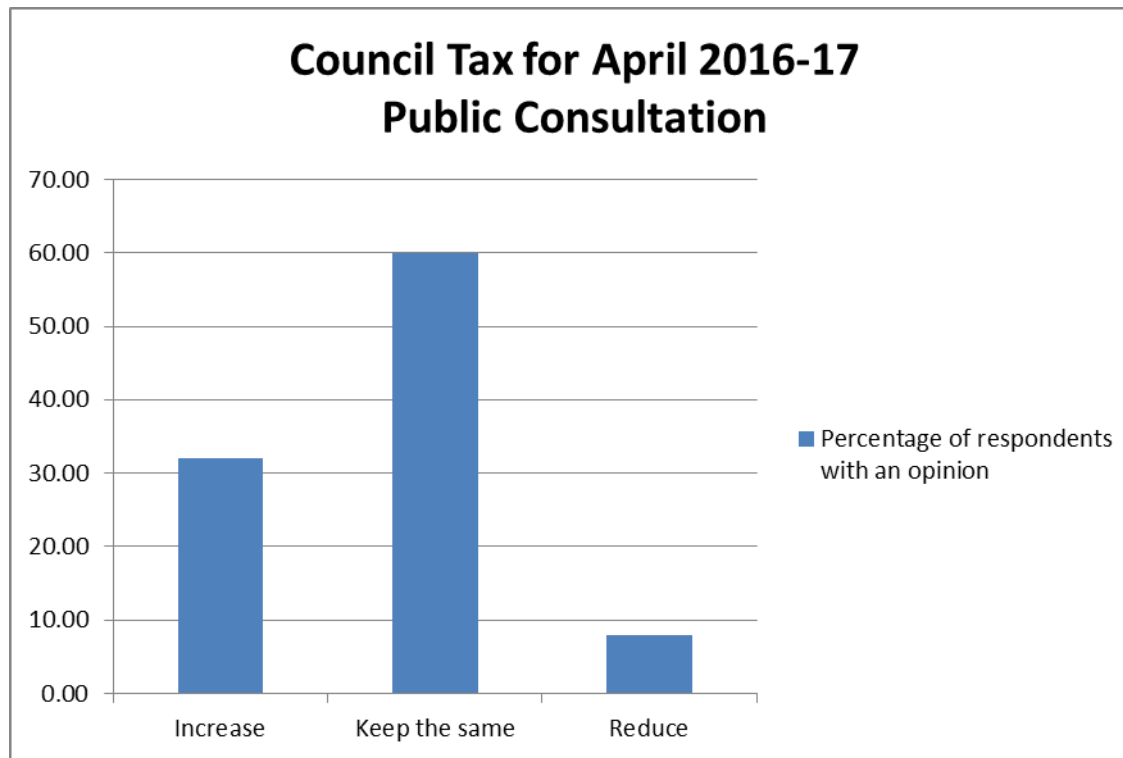
Public Consultation - detailed results across all questions



Priority	1-1_Noise	1-2_Bins	1-3_Street_Sweeping	1-4_Planning_Apps	1-5_Development	1-6_Housing	1-7_Enforcement	1-8_Car_Parks	1-9_Tax_Calculation	1-10_Tax_Collection	1-11_License_Inspection
High (response x3)	120	195	129	138	162	144	117	27	84	93	96
Medium (response x 2)	54	24	64	56	38	42	62	80	64	58	70
Low (response x1)	6	1	2	4	2	7	9	28	17	18	12
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	180	220	195	198	202	193	188	135	165	169	178
Potential Score	219	234	231	234	225	228	237	231	231	234	237
Priority score (percentage)	82.19%	94.02%	84.42%	84.62%	89.78%	84.65%	79.32%	58.44%	71.43%	72.22%	75.11%

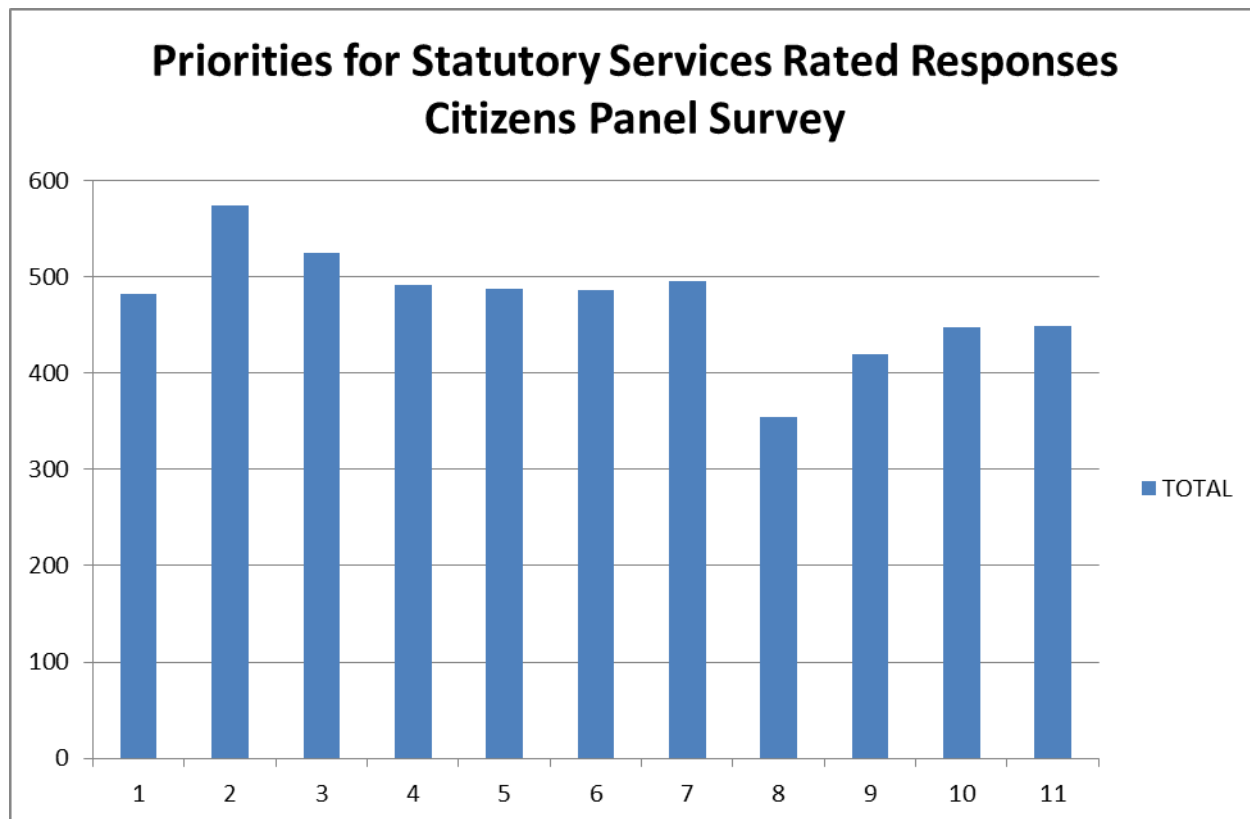


Priority	2-1_Grants	2-2_Health_Classes	2-3_Drug_Education	2-4_Police_Work	2-5_PubHealth_Work	2-6_Museum	2-7_Lifeline_Service	2-8_Day_Centres	2-9_Stray_Animals	2-10_Rejuv_Homes	2-11_Business_Bins	2-12_Highway_Rangers	2-13_Promoting_Businesses	2-14_Listed_Buildings
High (response x3)	87	57	90	138	72	42	114	93	36	114	66	99	72	57
Medium (response x 2)	66	62	68	52	76	68	62	66	76	44	68	68	56	70
Low (response x1)	15	27	14	7	16	24	7	13	24	18	18	10	22	21
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Score	168	146	172	197	164	134	183	172	136	176	152	177	150	148
Potential Score	231	231	234	237	234	216	228	231	222	234	222	231	222	225
Priority score (percentage)	72.73%	63.20%	73.50%	83.12%	70.09%	62.04%	80.26%	74.46%	61.26%	75.21%	68.47%	76.62%	67.57%	65.78%

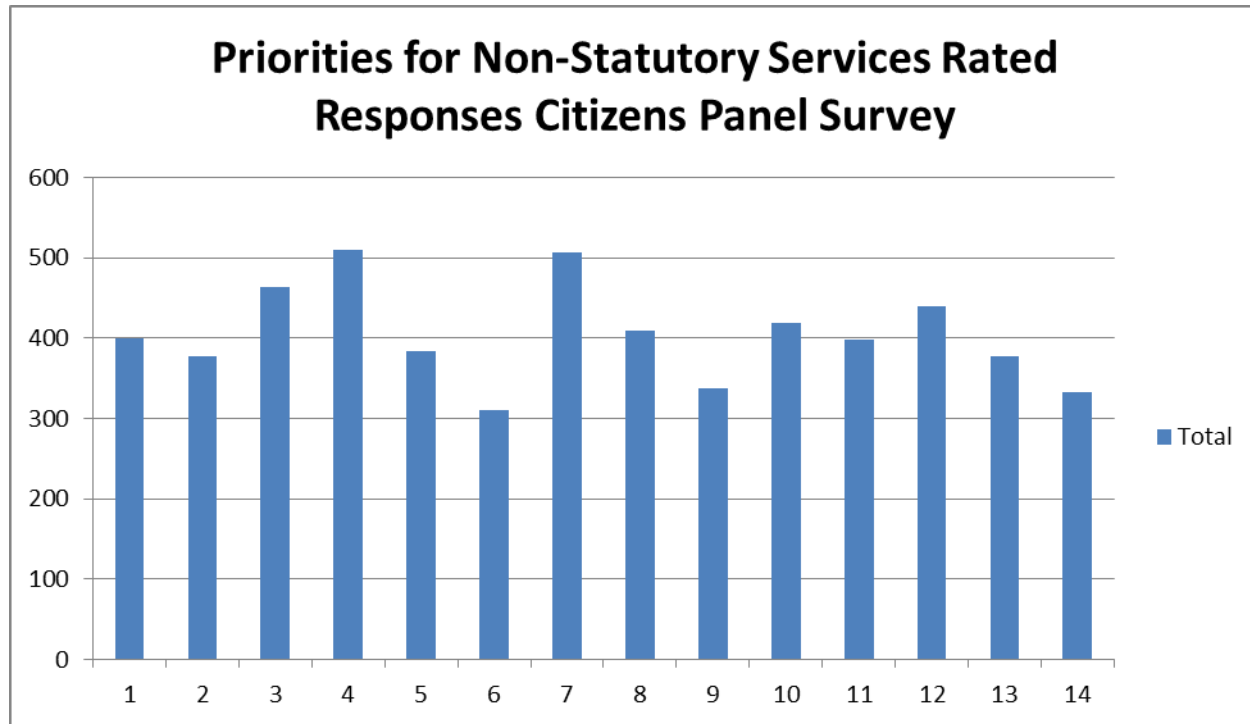


Priority		Counts	Percentage of those with an opinion
Increase the amount of council tax it charges		24	32.00%
Keep the amount of council tax the same		45	60.00%
Reduce the amount of council tax it charges		6	8.00%
No opinion		3	
Total		78	
Total excluding "no opinion"		75	

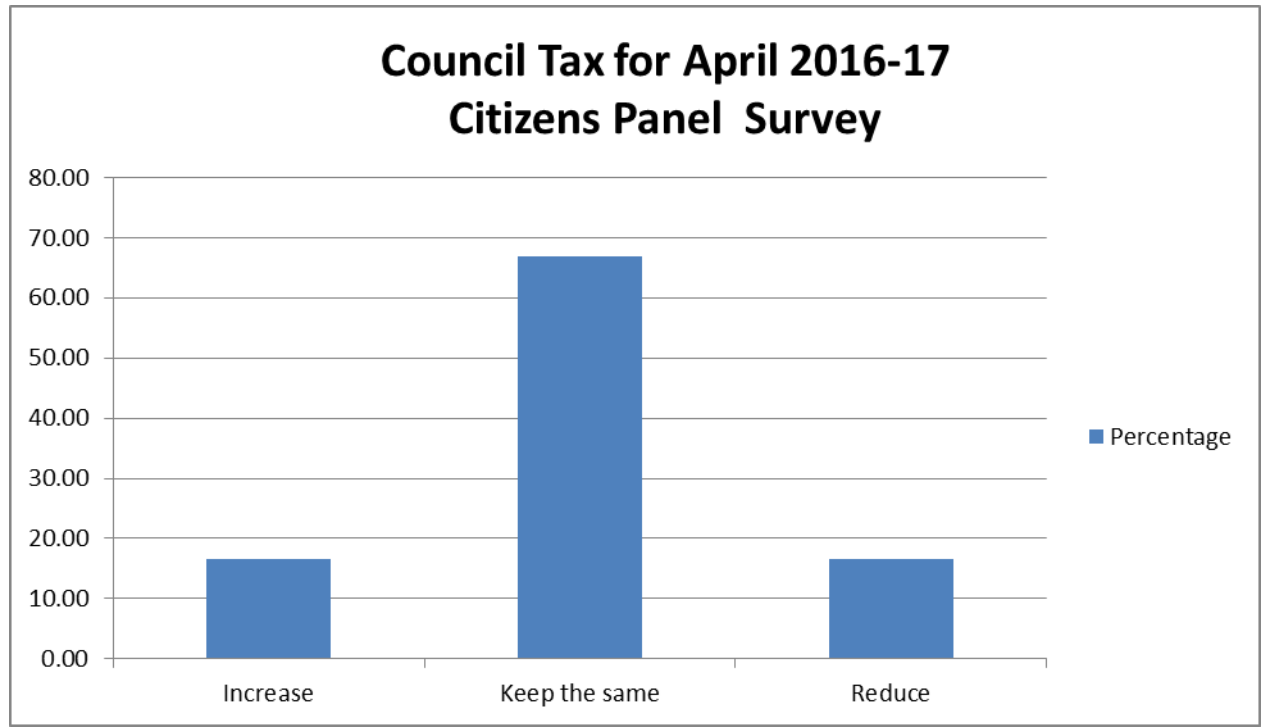
Citizens Panel detailed results across all questions



Priority	1-1_Noise	1-2_Bins	1-3_Street_Sweeping	1-4_Planning_Apps	1-5_Development	1-6_Housing	1-7_Enforcement	1-8_Car_Parks	1-9_Tax_Calculation	1-10_Tax_Collection	1-11_License_Inspection
High (response x3)	294	507	375	318	336	324	342	72	165	255	234
Medium (response x 2)	176	64	142	158	134	140	138	210	220	168	180
Low (response x1)	12	3	8	16	18	22	16	73	34	25	35
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	482	574	525	492	488	486	496	355	419	448	449
Potential Score	594	612	612	603	591	600	597	606	597	582	609
Priority score (percentage)	81.14%	93.79%	85.78%	81.59%	82.57%	81.00%	83.08%	58.58%	70.18%	76.98%	73.73%



Priority	2-1_Grants	2-2_Health_Classes	2-3_Drug_Education	2-4_Police_Work	2-5_PubHealth_Work	2-6_Museum	2-7_Lifeline_Service	2-8_Day_Centres	2-9_Stray_Animals	2-10_Rejuv_Homes	2-11_Business_Bins	2-12_Highway_Rangers	2-13_Promoting_Businesses	2-14_Listed_Buildings
High (response x3)	135	117	276	372	129	66	339	162	69	219	138	192	123	57
Medium (response x 2)	216	192	156	124	198	146	154	196	182	146	220	214	198	194
Low (response x1)	48	68	32	13	57	98	13	51	86	53	40	33	57	82
No Opinion (zero score)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Score	399	377	464	509	384	310	506	409	337	418	398	439	378	333
Potential Score	603	609	606	597	597	579	609	609	600	597	588	612	597	600
Priority score (percentage)	66.17%	61.90%	76.57%	85.26%	64.32%	53.54%	83.09%	67.16%	56.17%	70.02%	67.69%	71.73%	63.32%	55.50%



Priority		Counts	Percentage of those with an opinion
Increase the amount of council tax it charges		32	16.58%
Keep the amount of council tax the same		129	66.84%
Reduce the amount of council tax it charges		32	16.58%
No opinion		5	
Total		198	
Total excluding "no opinion"		193	

4. Appendices

4.1 Open text responses received

The following open text responses were provided where the respondent did not choose from the listed priorities, or submitted a separate letter/email:

Responses received:

A member of the public

I have just received a phone call from NWA in regards to a survey being conducted on your behalf.

I could not help but notice that there were no questions relating to housing for younger people within the town, but were loads of housing questions in connection with the elderly and people claiming benefits.

I agree that people that need help should get help, but what about younger people who have grown up in the town, do they not deserve housing within Saffron Walden also?

I am a hard working individual who contributes to the council through my taxes, but I will never be able to afford a house here due to the lack of affordable housing for young professionals. This is going to push such individuals out of the town, taking their council tax payments with them.

Can you please tell me what steps are being taken to address this situation.

A member of the public

Q1 (Car Parks...) Need to be able to pay by cheque or cash. Not everyone has computer!

Q2. (Highway Rangers...) Maintain rural pavements.

A member of the public

Q2. (Highway Rangers...) Road signs need cleaning

A member of the public

Q1 (Providing council housing...) Very high priority

A panellist

Section 1) Q3)

Day Centres - important for those who benefit in the town centres but not widespread enough to benefit the rural community where there are no Day Centres and no facilities to get there.

Microchipping - should not be done by the council but should be a legal requirement for the owner to get it done.

Emptying bins for businesses - if they are paying for it they should get the service but what they are paying should cover the service.

Highway Rangers - it seems every time in our parish when they have been asked to do something they can't do it! If evidence had been seen of them doing the work it would be a high priority!

Section 2 Q5)

Animal Warden - Have had dealings and although she would have liked to have helped she couldn't as she didn't get the support from the council. Not her fault at all.

Building control - Do not seem to take any notice of comments made by people affected in the area.

Day Centres - Would be very satisfied if those in rural areas could easily use them.

Housing Benefits - should be reviewed more carefully.

Council Housing Repairs - Totally dissatisfied as know of two elderly tenants who couldn't get anything done but when they passed away it seems that a lot of work has been carried out for the new tenants after they moved in. Also aware of repairs to houses being carried out on properties as a result of children abusing the properties. Believe that the council properties should be inspected periodically with no warning given. Money being spent on properties unnecessarily.

Tenant Liaison - don't understand that when there is a tenancy agreement in place the council do not ensure that it is adhered to.

Leisure Centres - Very dissatisfied as our council tax is spent on them but people in the rural community do not get the same benefit as those living close to them.

4.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire forms for the telephone, public and Citizens Panel followed an identical format.

The screenshot shows the Uttlesford District Council website navigation. At the top right, there are links for 'Skip Navigation', 'Home', 'Login', 'A to Z of Services', 'Search', 'Apply for it', 'Report it', and 'MyUttlesford'. The main navigation bar includes 'Resident', 'Business', 'Your Council' (highlighted), and 'Pay for it'. Below this is a search box with a 'Go' button. A secondary menu lists 'About the Council', 'Elections and Voting', 'Finance and Accounts', 'Consultation' (highlighted), 'Emergency Planning', and 'Councillors and Committees'. A breadcrumb trail at the bottom reads 'You are in: Your Council > Consultation > Council Spending - have your say!'.

The banner features the Uttlesford District Council logo on the left, which includes the motto 'Be Our Community'. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'Uttlesford District Council citizens Panel - Uttlesford Voices 11' in white text on a dark blue background.

Statutory Services

Q2 Below is a list of services Uttlesford District Council has to provide or has to ensure are provided by another organisation. For each service, please indicate whether you consider it to be a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority. (Please select one option for each service).

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Dealing with noise complaints, air and water quality issues and other environmental health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins (The town or parish councils in Saffron Walden, Dunmow and Stansted are responsible for public litter bins in their areas)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Council Spending - have your say!

... say on what the council's top spending priorities should be during 2016-17.

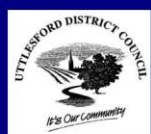
Uttlesford District Council sets a budget to decide how to allocate money to the wide range of services that the council

[Take part in the Uttlesford residents' survey here >>](#)

... es of the survey will be available from the Council Offices in Saffron Walden, the district council's customer service ... mow Library and the Thaxted Community Information Centre, or residents can request a copy by calling 01799 ... emailing consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk

... any queries regarding this questionnaire, please contact the Consultation Team at Uttlesford District Council on 01799 ... email: consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk

... is page | [Print this page](#) | [Subscribe to this page](#) | [Bookmark and Share](#)



Council Spending - have your say!

Uttlesford residents' survey 2015

Preparing the council's budget is a process that takes many months - and it can't be done without the input of the district's residents.

This survey gives you the chance to have your say on what should be the priorities for Uttlesford District Council and what we should spend your council tax on. The results of this consultation will help design the budget for April 2016 to March 2017, which councillors will be asked to approve in February next year.

**The closing date for this survey is
Thursday 24 September 2015 at 5pm**

If you have any queries regarding this questionnaire, please contact the Consultation Team at Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510670 or Email: consultation@uttlesford.gov.uk

Please answer the questions below by ticking in the appropriate boxes.

Q1 Below is a list of services Uttlesford District Council has to provide or has to ensure are provided by another organisation. For each service, please indicate whether you consider it to be a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority. (Please select one option for each service).

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Dealing with noise complaints, air and water quality issues and other environmental health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emptying your bins and emptying public litter and dog bins (The town or parish councils in Saffron Walden, Dunmow and Stansted are responsible for public litter bins in their areas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweeping the streets, litter picking, clearing up fly-tipping and keeping district council-owned land tidy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Deciding planning applications and making sure new buildings and extensions are built according to approved plans and following building regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning how the district will develop in the coming decades, including where new housing and businesses will be located	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing council housing and providing sheltered housing for older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enforcement work including prosecuting people for not paying council tax or council house rent, benefit fraud, fly-tipping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Running car parks and on-street parking such as residents permit schemes (this is done in partnership with other councils)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working out how much people should receive in housing and council tax benefits and paying those benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collecting council tax for Essex County Council, the police, the fire service, town or parish councils and Uttlesford District Council and collecting business rates on behalf of the government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspecting restaurants, pubs and other businesses which sell food and issuing various licences such as those needed for pubs, off-licenses, taxis, kennels and tattoo parlours and making sure people do not break the terms of those licences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q2 Below is a list of services Uttlesford District Council currently provides, but does not have to. For each service please indicate whether you think it is a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority. (Please select one option for each service).

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Giving grants to voluntary and community organisations such as the Citizens Advice, Uttlesford Community Travel and the Council for Voluntary Service Uttlesford	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Running health and fitness classes, particularly to help people with medical conditions and/or older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educating young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with the police and other organisations to keep Uttlesford safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with public health bodies on projects to keep people in the district healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Running Saffron Walden Museum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping older/vulnerable people live independently by providing the Lifeline service, through which users can raise an alarm if assistance is required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	High Priority	Medium priority	Low priority	No opinion
Supporting the volunteer committees who run day centres in Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden, Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley and Thaxted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collecting stray animals, microchipping dogs and cats and dealing with complaints from the public about pet and animal-related issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bringing privately-owned homes that have been empty for a long time back into use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emptying bins for businesses (businesses are charged for this service)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing the Highway Rangers service which carries out small jobs such as keeping road verges tidy through hedge cutting, mowing and strimming, repainting and repairing road signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting and supporting businesses in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giving advice on work to listed buildings and work to protected trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q3 **Just under 10 per cent of the council tax you pay goes to Uttlesford District Council, with about 70 per cent going to Essex County Council and the remainder to the police, the fire authority and your town or parish council.**

Over the last three years the district council has cut its share of council tax by a total of 6 per cent and froze the amount in the two years before that.

For next year (April 2016 to March 2017), do you think Uttlesford District Council should (please select one option only):

Increase the amount of council tax it charges

Keep the amount of council tax the same

Reduce the amount of council tax it charges

No opinion

Thank you for your responses.

It is hoped that a cross-section of Uttlesford residents will participate in this survey. To determine how effectively we have reached different age groups, genders and electoral wards within our district, it would greatly assist us in collating the responses to this questionnaire if you would answer a few questions on the following page.

Please proceed to the next page...

For office use only

About you:

You can choose not to answer any questions in this section. However, all the answers to the survey and the 'About You' section are anonymous and it is not possible for us to identify individuals from their response.

Please enter your postcode:

What is your gender?

Male Female

What is your age?

<input type="checkbox"/> 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54
<input type="checkbox"/> 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64
<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+
<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	

Please submit your questionnaire by 5pm, Thursday 24 September 2015

Thank you for taking part in our survey. Now please return your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided.

For office use only:

Scanning Calibration

4.3 Profiling

Telephone survey

Gender

Male	256
Female	273
Not provided	4

Age

Age Range	
18 to 29 years	71
30 to 49 years	190
50 to 74 years	209
75 years and over	62
Not provided	1

Public consultation

Gender

Counts			Percents		
What is your gender?			What is your gender?		
Base		75	Base		100.00%
What is your gender?	Male	32	What is your gender?	Male	42.67%
	Female	43		Female	57.33%

Age

Counts			Percents		
What is your age?			What is your age?		
Base		77	Base		100.00%
What is your age?	16-19	1	What is your age?	16-19	1.30%
	20-24	1		20-24	1.30%
	25-34	7		25-34	9.09%

	35-44	6			35-44	7.79%
	45-54	19			45-54	24.68%
	55-64	9			55-64	11.69%
	65+	35			65+	45.45%

Citizens Panel

The Citizens Panel is profiled so as to represent in microcosm then macrocosm of the district for all of the principal protected characteristics and as recorded by the Census 2011 and subsequent revised datasets.

4.4 How rating scores are calculated

Rating is a system recommended by Snap, the company who provide the consultation system used to collate and make the analysis of the 2016-2017 Budget Consultation results.

To establish the overall views of all those participating in this survey, priority selections made by respondents are given extra weight if chosen as a 'high priority' compared with those chosen as 'low priority'. This is called 'rating' and is achieved by attributing a weighted score (+3 for 'high priority', +2 for 'medium priority', +1 for 'low priority' and 0 for 'no opinion') to the number of responses received.

The overall score for each priority is therefore calculated to exclude all respondents who did not express an opinion.

For example:

Regarding priorities for Statutory Services, 'Dealing with noise complaints, air and water quality issues and other environmental health issues':

366 respondents selected this as 'high priority' = $(+3) \times 363 = 1098$

359 selected 'medium priority' = $(+2) \times 359 = 718$

72 selected 'low priority' = $(+1) \times 72 = 72$

14 had 'no opinion' = $0 \times 14 = 0$

So, the overall rating for this priority

$$1098 + 718 + 72 + 0 = 1888$$

To achieve a maximum 100%, all respondents with an opinion would need to have selected a priority as 'high priority' resulting in a rating score of $(+3) \times (\text{number of respondents})$ i.e. $(+3) \times (366 + 359 + 72)$ or 2391

The overall priority score, expressed as a percentage, for "Dealing with noise complaints, air and water quality issues and other environmental health issues" is therefore $1888/2391 = 78.96\%$

Committee: Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item

Date: 17 November 2015

10

Title: Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)
Consultation

Author: Adrian Webb
Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Item for decision

Summary

1. At its meeting on 18 June 2015, the Cabinet set out its draft LCTS scheme for 2016/17. The Cabinet also reviewed a number of Council Tax discounts which are also included in the scheme.
2. Following the Cabinet decision the proposals were subject to consultation and this report enables Scrutiny Committee to review the outcome of the consultation and comment on detailed proposals for consideration by the Cabinet on 10 December and Full Council on 17 December.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that
 - a) Members provide feedback on the outcome of the consultation for inclusion in the final 2016/17 LCTS Scheme proposal to go to Cabinet.

Financial Implications

4. None.

Background Papers

5. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Public consultation is carried out as part of the LCTS process.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the process.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The council is required to have the 2016/17 agreed prior to 31 January 2016

Sustainability	The objective is to achieve a financially sustainable set of arrangements.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	Ongoing demands on the Revenues & Benefits, Housing and Customer Service teams

6. The 2016/17 LCTS scheme runs from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. Taking into account the consultation results along with any comments from this committee, the Cabinet meeting on 10 December will recommend to Full Council on 17 December that the scheme is approved.
7. At its meeting on 18 June 2015 the Cabinet set out the draft proposals for the 2016/17 LCTS scheme. The proposal was for no change from the 15/16 scheme. The key criteria are
- a) The 2016/17 LCTS scheme is set on the same basis as the 2015/16 scheme and therefore the contribution rate is frozen at 12½% for the second consecutive year.
 - b) Provide discretionary subsidy for town & parish councils for 2016/17 in accordance with the principles set out below
 - 1.1. UDC should continue to provide discretionary funding to town and parish councils to mitigate the effect of LCTS discount taxbase reductions on the Band D Council Tax calculation.
 - 1.2. The total UDC parish subsidy pot to be distributed using the formula of [2012/13 Parish Band D x 2016/17 Parish LCTS taxbase reduction] – thus avoiding UDC subsidising any precept increases made in 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16. The payment then to be adjusted pro rata to ensure that the total funding pot is not exceeded.
 - 1.3. That the Council intends to continue town/parish council subsidy beyond 2016/17, subject to affordability issues that may arise from changes in local government finance.
 - 1.4. In the event of parish referendum limits being imposed by DCLG the entire scheme to be reviewed and consideration given to putting in place arrangements that minimise risks to town/parish councils.

- c) The 2016/17 Council Tax discounts are set at the same rate as the 2015/16 discounts as set out below:

	Discounts given 2013/14	Changes introduced as from 1 April 2014
Second homes	10%	Remove discount
Empty Homes Class A (major repairs)	100% for up to 12 months	Reduce discount to 50% for up to 12 months
Empty Homes Class C (vacant)	100% for up to 6 months	Reduce discount to 50% for up to 6 months
Empty Homes Premium (empty & unfurnished for more than 2 years)	None	Add premium of 50%

LCTS consultation outcomes

8. The consultation period ran from 27 July to 30 September and 1,089 responses were received. This is one of the largest responses for any non-planning consultation that the council has undertaken in recent years.
9. The following consultative methods were used, in all cases the same questions were asked:
 - Dedicated pull-out four page survey distributed with *Uttlesford Life*. A reply paid envelope was also included so as to make it as easy as possible for residents to respond. Additional paper copies were also distributed to the Council's main contact points at the Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the CSC in Saffron Walden.
 - Open public consultation. The survey was promoted on the Council's website from 27 July to 30 September via an interactive form using the Snap 11 consultation platform.
 - General promotion was carried out with a press release and exposure via the Council's social media channels and prominent placement on the homepage of the Council's website.

By the close of the consultation period, 1042 paper responses had been received and a further 47 online submission were registered. This represents a significant increase in overall submissions on each of the previous years when the

consultation was not so widely distributed. It should be remembered that not all respondents chose to answer all of the questions and that in a number of cases residents opted to submit statements and comments in support of the 'No' option even though they had answered 'Yes' to a particular section of the consultation.

10. The consultation full report is attached as Appendix One. In summary the respondents supported the 2016/17 proposed LCTS scheme.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
A detailed risk assessment shall accompany the budget proposals. There are no specific risks at this stage.			

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Appendix One
Uttlesford District Council

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

A report on the public survey about Local Council Tax Support provision in Uttlesford for the year 2016-17

October 2015





Contents

- 1. Executive summary**
 - Introduction
 - Results summary
 - Results actuals
 - Results priority analysis
- 2. Purpose methodology**
- 3. Survey results, detailed findings**
 - Survey results across all streams
- 4. Appendices**
 - Open text responses
 - Questionnaire
 - Profiling

1. Executive summary

In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by a new local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme. The Government required councils to protect pensioners so that they would receive the same level of support as they did under Council Tax Benefit. This means that LCTS has applied only to working age people. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920.

This is the fourth year that a consultation asking for residents' views on the provisions that the council makes for local people within the scheme.

Information about the LCTS setting process and the survey was distributed to every household in the district as an insert into the council's magazine *Uttlesford Life* and, as part of the authority's drive towards channel shift, the 2015 survey was also available through an online questionnaire which was publicised on the website and in press releases. A small number of additional copies of *Uttlesford Life* were distributed to libraries and the council's CIC points across the district to ensure that all residents would have a chance of taking part even if they had lost their original issue of the magazine. A copy of the survey was not included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire as it was considered that panellists could respond independently. The results are detailed below.

Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Introduction
Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) has replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and each year the council must consult on the proposed scheme for the following year.
The results of this consultation will be presented to councillors in the autumn with the final scheme for 2016/17 being agreed in December, to start on 1 April 2016.
The government's aim for the scheme is to promote the work ethic and ensure that people are better off working than not. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920.
The council wants to hear your view on this scheme so please take a few minutes to complete the form and send it back to us in the envelope provided. If your envelope is missing, please contact the council by phone 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk
Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/LCTS
This consultation is anonymous but collated results will be publicly available, including written answers. These will not be attributed to any individual but please do not include any personal or confidential information in your responses.

1. The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.
Do you agree with this? Yes No
If no, why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected, in this box

Please turn over

Results summary

The results of the survey have been analysed using Snap Survey Version 11 and are supplied as both counts (the number of people who answered each question) and percentages (the proportion of people who answered a question in a particular way). Data from both online and paper survey submissions has been merged to provide a single dataset.

The Uttlesford District Council LCTS scheme is the most generous in Essex providing additional protection and support for vulnerable working age people. Questions in the 2015 survey sought the views of residents and stakeholder groups as to whether this stance is generally supported and should be continued into the 2016/17 financial year. Since April 2014 discounts available on Council Tax liable for empty homes and second properties have been curtailed and the funds used to support the LCTS scheme. Additional sections of the survey asked for feedback on this approach. The results are given below:

Results actuals

Questionnaire responses

NB In a number of instances respondents who answered “Yes” to a question also added a comment in the box allocated to those answering “No” to that same question. This has led to an apparent disparity in the count return rates for a number of questions.

Headline results are highlighted in bold. Full text responses are available in Appendix 1.

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.</p> <p>Do you agree with this?</p>	<p>Yes: 979 (95.2%)</p> <p>No 49 (4.8%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.</p>	<p>90 comments received</p>
<p>Q2 For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000. Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year?</p> <p>If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.</p>	<p>Yes 800 (77.9%)</p> <p>No 227 (22.1%)</p> <p>250 comments received</p>
<p>Q3 The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district. Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost?</p> <p>If you have answered "No", why not?</p>	<p>Yes 946 (93,5%)</p> <p>No 66 (6.5%)</p> <p>90 comments received</p>
<p>Q4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.</p> <p>a. Second homes</p>	<p>Yes 971 (93.8%)</p> <p>No 64 (6.2%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house. Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct? If "No", please explain why.</p>	<p>83 comments received</p>
<p>b. Empty homes undergoing major repair Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months. Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs? If you have answered "No", what should be used and why?</p>	<p>Yes 813 (79.4%) No 211 (20.6%) 249 comments received</p>
<p>c. Empty homes Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months. Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs? If "No", please explain why.</p>	<p>Yes 752 (73.9%) No 265 (26.1%) 289 comments received</p>
<p>d. Empty homes premium Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay</p>	<p>Yes 753 (74.1%) No 263 (25.9%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>150% of the Council tax per house). Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period? If "No", please explain why.</p>	292 comments received
Q5 Further comments made regarding the LCTS scheme	123 comments received
Q6 Postcodes data entered	1014
Q7 Are you in receipt of LCTS?	<p>No 909 (90.3%)</p> <p>Yes 98 (9.7%)</p>
Q8 If you in receipt of LCTS, are you in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)?	<p>Yes 83 (91.2%)</p> <p>No 9 (9.9%)</p>

Results priority analysis

Previous surveys conducted in 2012 for the initial introduction of the scheme in 2013-14, in 2013 for the 2014-15 scheme, and in 2014 for the 2015-16 scheme were conducted to determine the most effective resolution for recipients in Uttlesford. Questions have been varied during each of the annual consultations. Whilst not directly comparable, the 2015 consultation for the 2016-17 scheme in part seeks to revisit a number of elements previously adopted in order to determine if there has been a move in public opinion. An example of this is seen in Q4a where the decision on second home discounts, implemented in 2014-15 following the 2013 consultation, is re-visited.

Local Council Tax Support Priorities:

The broad principle of the scheme has been maintained since its introduction, with some elements being refined in succeeding years. Headline results across all consultation streams indicate that the public are broadly in favour of the local scheme as currently delivered. Following public consultation, in December 2012 the Council adopted an LCTS scheme which included protection for pensioners (a mandatory requirement for all schemes) but added further protection for vulnerable working age people. Respondents indicated a marked preference for the continuation of this discretionary element with 95.2% supporting ongoing protection within LCTS for disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

The LCTS scheme for 2014/15 implemented an amendment to increase the minimum amount paid by LCTS recipients formerly entitled to full Council Tax Benefit from 8.5% to 12.5%. This still represents the most generous support package in Essex, but costs the Council approximately £209,000 per annum. Just over three quarters of residents (77.9%) indicated their continued support for retaining this arrangement.

A further financial implication of the scheme arises from the support Uttlesford District Council provides to town and parish councils in order to ensure that they are not adversely affected by the loss of Council Tax income. Again, there was consistent support for continuing this course of action with 93.5% of respondents indicating their approval.

A further section of questions sought to ascertain the current views of residents on Council discounts for second home owners and empty homes that were amended from 1 April 2014. These included the removal of second home discounts and the reduction of relief for empty homes undergoing repair. The resulting additional income has been used to support the LCTS scheme, thus reducing the direct impact on Uttlesford District Council budgets. Across the board there was support for maintaining the current level of discounts. Over nine in ten people (93.8%) continue to support the removal of the 10% discount for second homes whilst just under eight in ten (79.4%) maintain their approval for the reduction of empty homes discount – this was scaled down to 50% from 1 April 2014. Some 73.9% of those responding to the survey also continued to approve of the current level of discount on homes that are empty but not undergoing major repairs whilst a further 74.1% of respondents further agreed that the premium to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use should be continued.

2. Purpose methodology

Uttlesford District Council has a statutory duty to consider annually whether to revise its Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS), replace it with another or make no changes. If it wishes to amend or substitute the scheme in the forthcoming year the Council is obliged to consult with interested parties. The results of this consultation will inform the decisions made by officers and councillors when setting Council Tax spending for the year April 2016 to March 2017.

In a departure from the format of previous years the LCTS survey for the 2016-17 scheme was distributed as a centre page insert into the summer edition of the Council's widely distributed community newsletter, *Uttlesford Life*, which is delivered to

every household in the district. A copy of the survey was not, this year, included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire as it was considered that panellists could respond independently.

The consultation was run over the period 27 July to 30 September 2015. Respondents were asked to indicate their support for the scheme as it currently stands and to provide comments where they thought any amendments might be applicable. They were also offered the opportunity to make any further observations. For profiling purposes they were also invited to include a postcode and to state if they were in receipt of LCTS.

The following consultative methods were used, in all cases the same questions were asked:

- Dedicated pull-out four page survey distributed with *Uttlesford Life*. A reply paid envelope was also included so as to make it as easy as possible for residents to respond. Additional paper copies were also distributed to the Council's main contact points at the Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the CSC in Saffron Walden.
- Open public consultation. The survey was promoted on the Council's website from 27 July to 30 September via an interactive form using the Snap 11 consultation platform.

General promotion was carried out with a press release and exposure via the Council's social media channels and prominent placement on the homepage of the Council's website.

By the close of the consultation period, 1042 paper responses had been received and a further 47 online submission were registered. This represents a significant increase in overall submissions on each of the previous years when the consultation was not so widely distributed. It should be remembered that not all respondents chose to answer all of the questions and that in

a number cases residents opted to submit statements and comments in support of the 'No' option even though they had answered 'Yes' to a particular section of the consultation.

3. Survey results, detailed findings

Survey results across all streams

The results for each of the different consultation streams – paper and online surveys – are reported below as a single merged dataset.

LCTS substantive questions

This analysis comments on the responses received across both consultation channels and makes some reference to previous consultations. Results are broadly in line with the views of residents as reported in previous years, principally research undertaken with stakeholders and the Uttlesford Citizens Panel to inform the 2014/15 scheme.

Q1 Protecting pensioners and disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income saw 95.2% support with only a 4.8% rate of dissent. Protection for pensioners is a mandatory requirement, though Uttlesford District Council has also opted to provide additional protection for vulnerable working age people – disabled people, carers and blind people. Although only 49 people considered that this additional support should be withdrawn, some 90 respondents chose to make a comment. These comments ranged from support for the long term ill – “People who are genuinely long term ill, but not necessarily classed as “disabled” ought to be included at the discretion of the council” to a suggestion that “Everyone should pay something.”

Q2 Maintaining the level at which non-vulnerable LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay Council Tax at 12.5% for a third year was supported by 77.9% of respondents. Those who answered 'No' in relation to this question were invited to supply additional

comments on other groups that might be protected or additions to the scheme. In all 250 people offered additional information ranging from suggestions for a “Slight increase, say to 15%. We seem to lag behind all other councils, significantly behind some. Whilst there may be a good explanation, none is given” to suggestions that it should be raised to “At least 20%”. The survey for the 2014/15 scheme undertaken in 2013 saw a 58% support rate for the 12.5% payment level. By comparison the current survey results represent an almost 20% increase on that figure.

Q3 Supporting parish and town councils to ensure that they do not lose money was backed by 93.5% of those who answered this question. Some 66 people (6.5%) did not agree with the continuation of this funding to which a further 90 added some additional clarifying comments. These ranged from “The money saved would be better spent on the section of the community who need it and who the council are currently cutting” to “In the end it all comes from us”.

Q4 The partial funding of the LCTS scheme via changes to the Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes elicited a range of responses. Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed and as part of the consultation residents were asked if they considered it right that second homes should be charged at the same rate as for every other house. In total 93.8% agreed that this amendment to second home discount should remain in place, with just 64 people objecting. In all 83 comments were made in relation to this part of the consultation with statements such as “10% discount to continue” and “Second homes should receive discounts of 25% unless they are being used all the time or rented out”. In relation to empty homes undergoing major repair, there has, since April 1 2014, been a reduction in the Council Tax Discount available (down from 100% to 50%) for a period of up to 12 months whilst works are being completed. From both paper and online surveys 79.4% of residents agreed that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs. Supplementary comments were well supplied in relation to this question with 249 people quantifying their opinions. These varied from “Should be no discount” to “If the owner does not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!”. Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6

months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months. Some 73.9% agreed that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs and again there was a significant response rate in the additional comments box with 289 people leaving some extra detail. Some considered that the “Discount [should] be phased out completely” whilst another noted that “3 months is long enough to find a new tenant especially at present with short age of suitable rented properties”. Again, prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (i.e. the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house). Of those who expressed an opinion 74.1% (753 people) agreed that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period, though 292 people added some supporting comments. These ranged from “I don't think it's fair to pay more than the normal council tax and with the increased development I can see a problem for sellers and those wanting to rent their properties in the future. I already know of people being unable to sell properties now because of the developments” to “Should be 100% i.e. Pay 200% after 2 years empty”. In the 2013 survey for the 2014/15 scheme there was 84% support for the removal of the 10% second homes discount. The current return takes this up to just under 94% indicating the continued support. Likewise, in 2013, 79% approved of the reduction in empty homes discount in relation to those buildings undergoing repairs. This figure is virtually unchanged in the current survey, again indicating continued popular support. Similar questions posed in respect of empty homes vacant for up to six months and the empty homes premium were again approved in 2013 with 82% and 89% support respectively. In 2015 there has been an 8% drop (down to 73.9%) in support for the first of these and a 15% drop in the second (down to 74.1%). These two elements represented the only significant fall off of public opinion throughout the entire survey.

Q5 Respondents were invited to make any additional observations on the scheme and 123 people chose to take up this option offering a range of opinions from “We are told we need more housing, let's get what we have back on the market. I fail to understand why single occupancy receives a discount, they use the same services and should pay going rate” to “Nice to be asked for an opinion”.

Q6 Although 1089 responses were received via the paper and online surveys only 1014 people chose to enter their postcode data. This still provides a comprehensive dataset and permits the plotting of response distribution across the district.

Q7 Of those who answered this question 98 people indicated that they were receipt of LCTS. This represents 9.7% of those who replied.

Q8 In relation to the previous question 83 people in receipt of LCTS noted that they considered themselves to be in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer). It will be noted that whilst a further 9 replied that they were not in a protected category this makes a total of only 92 – 6 people then answered Q7 but omitted to follow through to Q8.

4. Appendices

4.1 Open text responses received

The following open text responses were received.

Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income. If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.

Responses received

Should be available only if claimant has been a resident of Uttlesford for a qualifying period - perhaps the three years prior to being eligible to claim

Your question is misleading – am I saying yes to what the government is saying? Or yes to what Uttlesford is doing? I agree with the Government stance on this. Not Uttlesford's.

Would like to see young vulnerable people e.g. those leaving care, protected. 18-25 year olds are very unlikely to earn more than a low income wage.

We should encourage all people to be self dependent.

People who are genuinely long term ill, but not necessarily classed as "disabled" ought to be included at the discretion of the council.

While I agree with Government's aim for this scheme, there are always those in dire need and it is part of the state's and citizens' duties to support them to avoid further and more expensive problems in health and education so that future generations can prosper.

As few as possible to be supported. Further 30% off 2016-17.

There is no reason why pensioners should receive a better settlement than the rest of the

community.

Disabled people and carers already receive benefits why should I as a full rate tax payer subsidise them anymore.

However - a small contribution should be made. Anything free is often abused. Most pensioners these days have adequate pensions.

A good scheme - enables those on low income to live on a reasonable standard of living and hopefully not be a burden on the community and state

Pensioners and disabled people on a low income do not have the same sorts of choices in seeking employment. Therefore financial threats are not likely to work, but are punitive.

Anybody who is in need.

While I have no objection in principal to protecting certain pensioners on low incomes and disabled people on low incomes.....should not their 'free' savings be taken into account ('free' savings meaning assets excluding the home itself)? The principal ought to be to protect individuals who cannot afford the CT, not whole categories of people.

Does 'disabled' income include those with mental health difficulties? This particularly vulnerable group should be included. Staff would, however, need a very intensive training in how to deal with distressed or vulnerable people, which they have clearly never received.

But those with a history or background of criminal history, refusal to work etc. Should not have same help as those who deserve it. People who have worked most of their lives and behaved in a proper manor.

Somehow, but other areas should be considered too like Health care aged, less able people, incapacitated mentally due to depression PTSD, anxiety attack, dementia sufferers (ALZ) and so on.....etc. And on top of this we have problem with Health care cost every time we travel to GP, Mind, hospitals etc. Financial poverty exists.

If they are not working then I think they should demonstrate their inability to work (eg. Number of hours in a caring capacity, the extent and type of disability) before being able to receive LCTS.

Those with the lowest incomes should be supported and not taxed with charges they cannot pay. But applicants should be properly assessed by competent people.

But you are cutting back where ever you can.

This benefit should be restricted to existing groups.

Definition of low income is crucial here. It should be around the level of state benefits e.g. Disability Living Allowance.

How is 'low income' defined?

Everyone should pay something.

Unfair they already receive plenty of other support and funding. They need to bear some personal sacrifices and not only demand more help. Maybe carers can remain their carers benefit but not disabled as carers have a choice so should be supported.

'Protected' yes, but to what degree?

Families who have a sick child, requiring frequent hospital visits/treatment should also be included. I work with parents in this situation and the financial impact on their households is huge - often needing to take unpaid leave from work to attend appointments - so whatever their income they are usually unable to meet normal financial commitments, and are not all in receipt of DLA or carer's.

Whilst agreeing in principal with the notion of protecting disable persons and their carers a distinction needs to be drawn between disabled groups. A person requiring a carer is more likely to be unable to work and thus increase their income; however, the definition of 'disabled' is too generic and may for example, include such groups as obese where the 'disability' is essentially a lifestyle cho

Not certain one way or the other.

This depends on the level of disability and support needed.

I think too many pensioners have never saved a penny for their old age. Their attitude is the state will have to look after me. There is too much protection promised by Government. Why do you think all these migrants want to come and live here.

I am 88, I live alone in a council bungalow and I do not feel protected from anything.

Although answered 'Yes' I think pensioners/carers where there are only 1 or 2 persons in a household should be considered. Today's salaries are much greater than they were, average £25,000 p.a. and ordinary pensioners and people who care for them will not receive ANYTHING like this as their income. In other words widen the income range. 'Single' households do not pay as much rates as v. elderly pensioners.

How is a 'low income' figure derived and how is it checked?

It rather depends on the circumstances surrounding their “low income”. Are they genuine cases or people who have chosen the benefits route. How long have they been resident in the UK?

Should be increased by 2.5% next year and a further 2.5% the year after.

Add low-income cancer patients who cannot work (Temporary protection).

Someone may have a low income but have huge wealth. If the criteria was low wealth and low income, I would agree.

There are very few pensioners left who did not have the means to provide for their old age whilst in employment. Would like to see scheme abolished within 10 years. There might need to be protection for those with health issues who struggled with employment.

. At the moment there is not enough proper jobs and support like day care for a lot of people outside of even these exempts. Young people can hardly even start their life without help from family - who already struggle.

I don't see why pensioners should be given special treatment either but if that is government policy you have to. Other groups have their needs meet with welfare and should not be given extra perks on spending.

It depends if they spend their income on smoking.

People who are in the ESA “support group” should also be protected as they are effectively “disabled” and unable to search for work at that time. They are therefore unable to increase their income i.e. anyone that is unable to increase their income should be protected.

This should be covered by disabled allowance.

Should follow government policy and minimise social care costs - promote work ethic.

Low income is not defined so difficult to judge without a threshold to work with. 'Some' of the people in these groups may have factors taken in or left out when calculating lets. Define low income?

People on low incomes because they are unable to work owing to mental or physical disability or long term illness.

Pensioners on low income should be encouraged to downsize to cheaper property. The LCTS should reflect this aim. Disabled people and carers should receive MORE support as they have little or no choice in their circumstance.

If they have pissed it up the wall all their lives, why should the rest of us support them in their

excess?

Protection should be means tested. Some pensioners are very well off.

Everyone on a low income should be given the benefit of the scheme.

Council Tax should be incorporated into income tax thus reducing bureaucracy, staff and time.

Single parent families on a low income should also be included.

Anyone on a low income should be protected

Each year UDC do a BIG media push proclaiming "CUTS" in council tax! Each year I end up paying more?

Stick to government scheme.

Households on low income include working age people on Employment Support Allowance and Income Support. It is (lawful) age discrimination to give protection to pensioners and not others, who are likely to be on lower income than many pensioners.

All those on low incomes must be protected from any schemes that would affect their income and reduce it in any way.

So long as people who are already working aren't penalised.

All people on low income. Some disabled and OAPs have a lot of money.

Throughout a person's working life, there is plenty of time to make provision for post-retirement income. Disability, apart from the most severe cases, is not a reason to work and make provision for future income. The onus here is for society as a whole to enable people with all but the most severe problems to provide income for themselves and to increase and maintain their self-esteem.

But I believe it only protects disabled people in the ESA support group and not disabled people in the work related group who have been told they are unable to return to work at the moment without extra help or support.

Everyone needs to be doing their bit to help the country cut the debt. There are lots of jobs and volunteering they could do to give something back to society.

No - there are obviously some disabled or carers that need this support, but others, do not and take advantage of 'the system'.

"Yes" as a general principle, but a more detailed answer would depend on the definition of and the policing of "low"

The discount should be reduced. The abuse of "Blue Badges" by the disabled is well known. Doubtless the discount scheme is also widely abused.

"Other groups" should include those in the retail trade who earn only pence more than the minimum wage.

Low wage earners with no other income should also be supported.

It would have been handy to have been able to know what % of the Council's budget we are dealing with here. It looks like a very small %. That makes the decision easier.

Pensioners should have made provision for their old, carers should be paid a living wage, disabled are entitled to benefits.

All people should be protected if their state is through no fault of their own.

If people have worked hard all their lives, they should have the benefits they deserve.

People who need social security support and housing "benefit" should not pay Council Tax. If people with no property are required to pay Council Tax, then it is effectively a poll tax.

Subsidies should be considered when all adults pay council tax and not just the householder as at the moment. There is already too great a burden on householders which is disproportionate.

Stay at home mothers/fathers who need to look after under 5s, if they are on low income. single occupants

As pensioners are protected - UDC has no say on this. Everyone on low income should be protected. UDC should absorb the cut in funding as some councils in London do, This should come before all services except those that UDC must by law provide. To do other creates division and indeed ill will against those who are protected.

I think UDC should concentrate on the quality of services it is giving, not on charging for services it doesn't give, or charges by the back door (brown bins - which take cut flowers but not garden waste because you want to be able to charge for that!)

All people on low income should be given protection. I know a number of people who have moved from benefits to working and have been worse off because of losing several benefits including council tax and housing.

Being disabled and a carer I hope we will not be shoved to the back burner again. We have worked all our lives paying into the system so we should be treated with respect not as a nuisance.

Protection should also be given to single mums on low incomes with children under five years old. Protection should be withdrawn from pensioners on low incomes paying council tax and living in houses in bands E-H of the council tax assessment scheme.

In principle those requiring financial assistance should be provided but this should be subject to regular scrutiny and revision if circumstances change.

I see no reason why pensioners should be protected

I agree that disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income should be protected, but NOT pensioners on low income. Disabled people and carers are usually unable to change their low income status, whereas I believe pensioners have more options.

Pensioners etc. get other benefits and top ups so should be treated as others entitled to LCTS. Whilst pensioners have earned the right to special treatment (they've paid their dues already), everyone else on a low income should be treated equally. This is about reducing the amount of money demanded from people with limited means, so it should be based on peoples' abilities to pay, not merely whether or not they fit into two arbitrary categories (however worthy they might be).

There could be a scale, dependent on how much a person can afford.

I don't see why pensioner should be protected, simply because they are old but if the Government insist you can't do anything. People on the same income should not be treated differently because they are disabled or a carer

Q2 For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000.

Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year?

If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.

Responses received

20% as a minimum. Uttlesford should not be out of line with other districts

Uttlesford's rate is too low. 25%-30% would be fairer to local tax payers

But only if the extra money is spent on repairing the roads around the district in desperate need of repair

That is half the rate of some other districts. Be realistic!

20%

15%

Why is Uttlesford's % so much less than all the others? Surely it should increase just as the council tax increases every year. A small increase would help cut the cost to the council.

20% for fairness and equality across Essex

15% to bring us nearer average

Slight increase, say to 15%. We seem to lag behind all other councils, significantly behind some. Whilst there may be a good explanation, none is given.

20% is more in keeping with other councils

13% a small increase in line with most others.

15% - This keeps rate lowest in Essex

It should be brought in line with Chelmsford and Braintree + 20% seems to be the average.

increase to 15% in third year, it is less than 50p a week and educates the public to the cost of services - 'nothing is for free!'

Council contributions should reduce to zero

An increase should be considered certainly it should not be reduced. Perhaps 20% is fairer.

Q2. We should bring the rate up to 15% this is still too low figure compared to other councils. But as a council we should encourage people to pay as much as possible.

15% it's good that we're below the rest of Essex, but I'm not sure we need to be that far below, so a small increase is justified.

12.5% is very commendable providing it does not cause problems with the council's budget elsewhere.

Correct and reasonable to ask for contributions of £23 p.a

17.5% still better than other Essex Council and the additional cost is less than £1 a week.

15% UDC need to raise its percentage by 2.5% over the next 3 years. 20% is asked for by other councils. Why is UDC discriminating against its council tax payers yet again - green garden bin discount etc.

No reason is given for why Uttlesford should be more or less generous than the rest of the County! The money released could be better allocated.

25% a much fairer rate for tax payers and more in line with other councils.

15% still lower than anyone else.

Take average of the other councils. This rate is too low!

20% which seems to be in line with similar councils.

What about people who are struggling having worked all their lives their state pension has been delayed why should I support after I cannot afford to do this.

On second thoughts I feel that a good small increase of 2.5% should be applicable. This would mean that Uttlesford claimants would still be paying less than elsewhere but is a fair increase after two years at the same level.

25% The protection should be uniform in the district

Not fair to subsidise towns and villages.

8.50%

Make work pay

Should be more in line with other councils.

Although I agree in principle with the authority it should be more in line with other councils.

It's too low

I think it should be slightly higher 15% with the money put towards benefitting the community

I dont have the information to answer 2 & 3.

To keep the rate the same is a cut because of inflation shameful that you would even think about it. Parish Council is kept well briefed by its representatives attendance at Parish Council meetings at Hempstead.

I am proud to live in a district that that look, after the genuinely needy.

21 is average between all councils. This amount makes more sense UDC is low compared to other councils.

17.5% would be appropriate. it would cost an average recipient £46.14 a year:less than £1 a week. The figure would be justifiable because at present Uttlesford DC's rate of 12.5%is seriously out of line with all other essex authorities.

Original community charge promises were that charges would take into account ability to pay over 10% is injurious and inexcusable.

Not sure why Uttlesford is so low. What is the money being spent on?

It should be brought into line with other councils, with a minimum increase of 2.5%

Raised to 15% this would ease the pressure on the council's costs, albeit not significantly, without imposing a wholly unrealistic financial burden on the LCTS recipient.

Raise to 15%

At least 20%. I don't get any relief even when I'm out of contract (sole employed) and struggling to pay. Why should I help the feckless.

It should be 8.5% or less. The people receiving the LCTS have not seen their income rise by 12.5% therefore they are worse off having to pay 12.5%.

At least 20%

Suggest 15%, this is still lower than all other councils in Essex.

Put up 2.5%. Uttlesford need more money.

At District Council boundaries, near neighbours in similar circumstances would be paying very different council amounts causing potential stress/desire to move across the street.

20% as at VAT increased and inflation rate and no job sector available to take peoples skills, and recessions and pverty of social, makes legitimate 2 the help not make them more vulnerable.

15% would be fair

Uttlesford % is so much lower than all the other Councils. It needs to increase in steps each year to come up to around 25% (stepped over 5 years).

The additional income will provide funds for those people who are less well off.

15% Even then it would be the lowest in Essex.

15% would be a minimal rise and keeps us at the lower end compared to other Councils.

Suggest 20% in line with other Essex Councils.

I don't know as I do not have access to the Council's budgetary information.

Increase to 15%

It should be in line with other local councils (20%)

15% seems a fair amount.

On the assumption that UDC is in a position to fund it easily.

The old and vulnerable should not be asked to pay any increase.

20% its in line with other low % councils.

15% improve litter collection, road repairs etc.

15% wouldn't be unreasonable.

20% in line with most others

The increase of £23.07 is a modest amount, given that LCTS recipients are already being treated favourably compared with others who despite having relatively low incomes nevertheless are paying the full tax. I suggest therefore that the 2.5% increase should be implemented.

It should be slightly increased to 15%

I think it is reasonable to pay 30% as Castle Point. After all services have to be maintained by council. In a time of adversity everyone should pay a little more. They still get 70% discount!!!

The mean of other council's figure - between 20-25%

15% - 17.5% - 20% over 3 years and continue to match lowest rate in Essex thereafter.

We need to support people who are not too well off.

22.5% Average of remaining councils. Why is Uttlesford's claimants contribution so low?

15% It seems reasonable to me that UDC should narrow the wide gap between itself and other

authorities in Essex.

I would prefer us to be a beacon district, providing more help, than one which offers less. However it is difficult to judge without knowing numbers involved and relative levels of hardship.

25%

It should pay it's way. It should be more in keeping with other councils. I'm suprised they are not all the same 20%.

As you are out of line with ALL the others an increase to 20% seems correct.

If we want to protect services esp for vulnerable we need to pay a little more and we are out of recession so the time is right to do so.

25% - to make it comparable with other areas and reflect the fact that Uttlesford is not a particularly poor district.

The figure should accord with the lowest figures of other Essex councils i.e. 20%, as a minimum. There is no reason to maintain an artificially low contribution which i suspect has political connotations. In any case the increase would be a mere £10 on a little over £1.00 p.w.

We live in a special part of the UK, the quality of life is excellant. Whilst there are less fortunate individuals who need support I do not see why their contributions should be out of line with other Districts in the area.

15% would still be the lowest in Essex.

Increase to 15% to bring closer to other Essex Councils but still keep the rate low for those in need.

It should be more in line with other councils.

8.50%

The disparity between Uttlesford and the other councils is too great. I suggest raise it over 3/5 years to 20% paid. The money raised bight be better used for targeted social care at home.

Where did the 12.5% come from when the nearest rate is 0.5% and I have not had a pay rise since 2008. I try to do everything to reduce my outgoings but somehow all this rate hike always seems to make it a losing battle. Even if we go by the rate of inflation, this is way too high. This is government taking money because they can. That's all.

Those who suffer from certain 'mental' illnesses may find it hard to return to the work place - even though physically able. Such things should be taken into consideration and this group should be

protected.

It appears ridiculously low, and out of step with other Essex councils.

20% fall in line with other councils

We should be in line with other areas nearer to 15 % or 17.5% . This higher rate would therefore add less than £0.13 per day to recipients rather than increasing the cost to those of us NOT receiving LCTS.

Uttlesford should position itself in line with the other councils in the county - may 20-25%. Asking people to make a sensible contribution to the cost affects the way all view and use the service.

As the number of people has dropped, the percentage could be increased.

Should be lowered - say 10% - Pensioners, fixed income.

15% first year, 17.5% second year, 20% third year. Can't see why Uttlesford should be so much less than others.

Initially 15% increasing to 20% in 2017/2018

15% because holding at the lower figure for another year may stretch other council resources and even low incomes will rise enough to cope with the higher rate (living wage introduction...).

No, Uttlesford should not be significantly out of step with other councils. 20% should be charged but increase would need to be stepped.

It should be about 20% in line with the rest of the county.

20% to maintain parity.

At least 30% . Genuine needy cases will hopefully be covered 100% by benefits. All Essex councils should be in unison.

It would be sensible to raise it to 20% in line with many other local councils. This still seems like a relatively small contribution to ask people to pay. The bill for keeping rate at 12.5% is very high.

We are currently out of step with other councils. I would suggest 20%.

15% an incentive to recipients of LCTS to help themselves.

Should go up to level like other councils - e.g. 20% so that the cost of £209,000 is reduced.

20% (or more)

Council should consider bringing rate more in line with other local areas.

Uttlesford is well below Essex average. If not in 2015/16 the rate should rise to 15%, possibly with a commitment to hold it therefore at least 3 years.

15% . If amount does not rise slowly, then at some point a larger increase would be required.

A rise to 15% = an extra £2 (almost) a month should not cause too much pain

It should be increase to align with other local councils. Currently too low at 12.5%.

Possibly not. Seems low.

20%. Average amount by all councils = 21.75% therefore 20% is a fairer charge.

20%. Incentive to find work. Council use surplus to help pensioners, disabled and other services.

Increase to 20% so it is comparable.

Work upwards from 12.5 to 20 in increments say 15,17.5, 20. I can't think of a reason why council money should be spent in this way while so many other services are being cut.

As long as the council can maintain this and is viable given budgets.

Review bands. The poorest of even working families struggle. House owners struggle to maintain their properties. DO NOT RISE. GO BACK.

If Southend and Basildon can charge 25% so should you. Big issue would effect my vote to be honest you are giving my money to others.

15% - A reasonable increase per annum when other council services are under stress less than £2 a month/6p a day.

The average of the other councils is 22.461% I consider it should be increased gradually to 20% ion keeping with other councils.

I believe that Uttlesford residents have a better chance of employment than in many other areas. I think that the level of support should be more in line with other councils. The figure should be 25%.

20% to be in line with other Essex councils.

Should be no lower than 20% to be in line with the other Essex Councils.

Suggest an increase of 1.5% - i.e. Roughly in line with inflation.

12.5 is very low maybe 15% would be more in line with other councils.

It is not comparable. It ought to be nearer 20% the minimum of other Essex councils. It would be less than £1.50 a week extra, but mean a significant increase in revenue for the council.

20% Bring it into line with other Essex councils

Uttlesford should be brought more into line with other Essex Councils so that residents in Uttlesford will not be expected to provide a greater subsidy than elsewhere in Essex.

15% as a trial and the following year reconsider whether it should return to 12.5% or raised further.

Revert to 2013-14 figure.

But only for the people in the defined groups but again what defines low income?

12.5% is well out of line with other authorities. The arithmetic average of the other districts is 22.5

Uttlesford should aim to bring itself into line with them.

At least 15% Uttlesford is a prosperous council and should support those who are on low incomes.

See Q1

20%. This seems to be the amount considered apt by most areas.

My question would be at what rate in next 5 years will Uttlesford need to be at. I would suggest rising rate slowly rather than a larger hike like other councils. If 2019/20 20% then a modest rise of 2.5% a year seems in order.

Before answering I would want to know what use the £209,000 saved would be put to.

20%

We should be more in line with other local councils - maybe 15%

At least 15% to bring it nearer to other Councils. That figure is still a long way below the next highest so perhaps 17.5% or even 20% would be more appropriate. Whatever I think it should definitely be raised.

20% to bring us closer to the mean.

- I would prefer LCTS recipients to pay 0%.

Make small increase to help stop cut backs

20% to be more appropriate

The council have already worked wonders by keeping the rate so low for the past 2 years. The money has to be found from somewhere!

20% adjacent areas, such as Chelmsford (20%) and Harlow (24%) have considerably higher rates

It should be brought in line with other districts 15% to 20% seems about right.

People are paying much less here than in other districts. They have to be realistic that we all have to pay

more.

This figure is a lot lower than any other council, and should be more in keeping with their rates. At least 20%.

Uttlesford rate @ 12.5% is much lower than the rest of the list it should be be min 15% for 15/16 and rise a further 5% next year.

The rate should be 720% to match other essex councils.

Should be more inline with other areas.

A rise of 15% would seem reasonable.

15%

15% An increase of £23.07 per recipient is reasonable to ensure that the benefit is available to all that need it.

15% would seem more realistic.

15% will be nearer to the Essex average.

15% would seem more realistic.

The majority is 20% which seems more realistic

Needs to be increased to Essex average - 20%

It isn't quite clear what you mean here. Could it be tiered? So 12.5% for first year, then increase?

A much lower figure and one that means I pay less!

Congratulations on having the lowest rate in Essex. However, this should not be a "postcode lottery". I feel the rate should be zero across the country subsidised by the government. Less admin for Uttlesford.

Should be more in line with other districts.

A figure between 20-30% in line with other councils. The subsidy provided by Uttlesford is unaffordable given the need to show austerity.

Instead of 12.5%, maybe lowering it to 12%

LCTS must continue to be available for those who need it the most.

Should go up to 20% for comparable purposes.

The rate should be increased in line with other councils. What makes Uttlesford different?

15%. Because this is still lower than most other councils and is moderate increase.

If Yes it will be taken elsewhere and may double next year. I think an increase of 2.5% is acceptable.

Fair to pay 25%. People will have to cut down on drink and fags.

I think 20% is reasonable. Uttlesford is too generous in this instance.

It should be brought in line with the majority of councils e.g.20%

15% with a view to increasing 2.5% year on year towards 20% in line with the modal average of other LAs. Currently UDC is considerably lower than other LAs therefore not unreasonable to increase.

15% to move forward again and gain parity eventually with other Essex Councils by regular annual increases

It should be 20 the same as the lowest % for other areas.

15% minimum

£209K - or even an increase to , say, £251K, is such a small percentage of the overall budget that the importance of protecting the low paid is more important than increasing towards the Essex average.

The figure should remain at 12.5%. The Council should continue to operate within its means and not seek to raise its charges endlessly as it did a few years ago. There is still much waste that can be cut from the Council expenses.

20% still compare favourably with other areas.

1.Many low income households have a high income male who stays overnight and weekends/holidays.

Also some children /teenagers work. 2.These same households can run 2 cars (typically 3 to 7 year old models), own a dishwasher, high end cookers/hoods, expensive garden tools/lawnmowers 3.The average of the above in the table for the years 2014/16 is 21.75% (with the mode and median figures both 20%) making Uttlesford's 12.5% look ridiculous. Use 20% to 25%. 4. Increases in minimum wage due April 2016 increasing to £9 /hour by 2020

15%

Slight increase say 15%

Should be in line with other councils and be at least 20%

Perhaps a little bit higher to bring it in line with the others - say 20% contribution from claimant or just below.

The council should aim to reduce it back to about 8% on the basis that CT is a tax on property. In general the richer you are the larger your property, the subsidy is thus well directed and funded.

15%, we are all having to make sacrifices.

Need to calculate monetary value claimant contributes for each council in Essex and ensure UDC claimants pay an equal value. EG Braintree c/tax is less than Uttlesford therefore 20% of Braintree c/tax is less than 20% of UDC tax. Need to adjust accordingly - needs to be greater than 12 1/2%. May need transitional period?

Public finances are under pressure. Assuming these funds are directed to 'good use'. Else where there is no reason why Uttlesford shouldn't fall in line with other Councils.

The benefit culture is becoming a way of life, it has become a problem to differentiate between the needy and the greedy. They can afford mobile phones, cigarettes etc.

The benefit culture is becoming a way of life, it has become a problem to differentiate between the needy and the greedy. They can afford mobile phones, cigarettes etc.

If it were to go higher, people on low income will fall into debt.

20% to bring Uttlesford into line with other Essex Councils.

15%, as a first step in gaining harmony with other Essex councils.

Rather than keeping the money it needs to go to pensioners who need it.

The rate for recipients of social security and for people in rented accommodation on low incomes should be zero. Council tax should be paid by private landlords, and not passed on to tenants. Social housing schemes should not pay tax.

Everyone should make a greater contribution to spread the cost fairly between all the adults within the area.

15% - 20% same as other local councils and will enable Uttlesford to spend in other areas.

It should be increased to 15% this time and up to 20% next time to come in line with neighbouring councils.

12.5% represents too great a deviation from the Essex average.

At least 20%. Why should those who pay 100% continue to subsidise. 12.5% is a JOKE. An extra £69 is probably less than they spend on luxury goods such as the latest phone with 4G or SKY TV

It should be brought in line with other councils rates

Do not understand

15% need to come closer to the other Essex councils

15% at least, possibly 20%. In cases of real hardship and poverty help should be given.

If you have more money then you can provide better services and a smarter town in Saffron Walden.

17.50%

The rate should be increased to 15%. This will mean that local claimants still pay 5% less than other districts. The economy is improving and this should be reflected in the payment

20. The figure should be more closely aligned with the rest of Essex. Uttlesford needs to find ways to save money.

15% and gradually increased inline with majority i.e. 20%

100% benefit - already poor recipient should pay nothing

20% is more in line with other Essex councils. However, it would have been good to see data for adjacent councils e.g. South Cambs before making any response here.

We should be in line with other councils

25% should be used, paying a quarter of what everyone else has to pay seems very fair and in line with other councils. The £209,000 could be used on facilities for everyone to benefit from especially the elderly or children.

This sum could be better spent improving facilities for all council tax payers who are struggling.

20-25% in line with other councils

The figure should be 15% and would still be one of the lowest for Essex. This would enable the council to make a substantial saving for allocation elsewhere.

20%. The current rate is significantly lower than all other Essex Council and I don't see the justification in maintain this disparity. I would hope that an increase 5 would reinforce the encouragement that work pays. In these times of reduced funding. I don't think that we can be so much more generous than other councils.

The average for all 14 councils is some 21%. I see no reason why Uttlesford's should be maintained at the lowest level. I would suggest at least 15-18% for 2015/16 us when compared with other parts of Essex.

Increase to 15 % to bring in line with others.

15% - The figure remains relatively low, saves the council a significant amount of money and only impacts recipients by less than £2/month.

20% to keep in line with other councils. Uttlesford currently way out of line.

A higher figure to encourage more people to go to work. We are an affluent area with low unemployment and much opportunity to work.

Increase the rate to encourage more people back into full time employment and if this rate is increased more can be done for the pensioner or the disabled.

20 so we get better public services.

As other councils can give a 25% discount I feel we should do the same for the most needy

Raise it to the Essex average

I think 12.5% is too low, considering the demands on the Council Tax. I would suggest 20%, which is in line with other Essex councils.

Unless there are special circumstances affecting Uttlesford, the rate should not be so much lower than the average for the county. Suggest matching Tendring at 15%

The average for other Essex Councils for 2014/2015 is 22%, so why are you so out of step? Should increase to minimum 20% for next year.

It should be increased in line with the other councils

The Uttlesford rate is way below other councils, and even the second lowest, Tendring, has increased from 15% to 20%. I think that an increase to 15% would be justified, and still leave Uttlesford the most supportive of Essex councils.

Why not reduce the discount to the level of our peers and spend the money saved on allowing others, not currently covered by the existing scheme but who are on an equally low-income, claim the same benefits?

All councils appear to have a different rate, which is effectively a post code lottery. Uttlesford should set a rate of 20% to bring the rate in line with other councils. The 20% rate would still be the lowest in Essex. 20% should be used, as this figure reflects the average of our neighbouring councils.

According to http://npi.org.uk/files/9214/3386/4426/CTS_challenges_and_options_FINAL.pdf minimum payments have mostly risen; the most common is now 20 per cent.

I would suggest 15%. It is difficult to argue in favour of subsidising the low income groups by so much more than elsewhere in Essex.

We are the lowest in the area, I think there should be a small increase to 15% at least (if not even more to 18%)

It is too high.

It should be more in keeping with other councils. It is not clear why it should be so much less.

The council should charge these people as much as they are allowed to - fairness to all council taxpayers

Q3 The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district.

Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost?

If you have answered "No", why not?

Responses received

Each Parish and Town Council should pay their own way. Balance their books!

It's just book-keeping. Robbing Paul to pay Peter

Town and Parish councils can raise their precept more easily than UDC who I believe are capped by central government as to their ability to raise money - the taxpayer has to pay whichever way it falls.

It is vital that this is continued.

In the end it all comes from us.

They should have their own grants etc.

Selective support may be acceptable, depending on the causes of the need being justified. But general support could lead to unjustified dependence.

The Councils should be responsible for their own losses.

Council tax is charged across the full area of the council. Town and parish should not be involved.

It surely makes no difference where the money comes from, it will be paid by tax payers.

Yes: (in the interests of 'keeping things simple!')

Parish Council so charge the right amount in the first place.

Local/Parish councils must propose and execute their own budgets. Makes Councillors accountable for their own proposals and results.

Need to know what they do first before I can answer this.

Have to pay for it either way so makes no difference.

The money saved would be better spent on the section of the community who need it and who the council are currently cutting.

Depends on other factors. A yes/no answer is not as straight forward as you have worded it.

Unfair

However I am aware of Parish Councils who have tens of thousands in reserve, never touching it whilst contingency cash is good practice, perhaps those with a sizeable pot do not need a council boost of cash.

Times are tough for Councils. Households will have to absorb the few pence increase in Parish Council Tax.

Not sure/don't know.

See Q.2 reasoning.

It is impossible to answer this without more knowledge of what the councils concerned are providing, and what will suffer at parish or district level if either has reduced funds.

Parishes should be able to self finance their needs.

Providing there is not a difference between Town and Parish Councils and one may be expected to pay disproportionately more than another - NO.

People should pay the difference themselves.

If the county council is prepared to find the shortfall of other Councils at a minimum of 20% why should Uttlesford be different? The only losers are Uttlesford residents who should expect the same level of service as elsewhere - less money available must reflect in reduced services.

The system you are using encourages financial discipline rather than thrift.

It is more important to protect disabled vulnerable people than to protect the generality of tax payers from increases.

This layer of council should be abolished entirely - it is unnecessary and a waste of money.

Each town or parish council should shoulder more responsibility to fund their spending.
A very small increase in highest band properties would easily collect the amount stated.
They should live within their means as all of us are always advised to.

Yes - but scrutinise how they own their budgets - to be satisfied that the funds are applied for policies Uttlesford supports.

If possible

(Yes) although ultimately the same tax payers are paying!

Why can they not budget for it themselves?

Essex County Council should bear the cost.

Town and parish councils should set realistic budget for the needs of the local community and they should stick within those budgets. They should be able to hold contingency funds.

It's swings and roundabouts! We would pay through our Council Tax, however it is labelled!

I think this relief should be better targeted at those councils with the highest need.

The grant to our village is too high at the moment. Villages like our village (the majority) take on developments / so called improvements unnecessary which would not occur if funds provided by Uttlesford were less.

I don't know enough about this to comment. I would like the area to be liveable in a by a range of socio/economic classes/groups, so if support in this way would help that, my answer would be yes.

I don't understand this question and I am not so very stupid. This questionnaire is NOT right.

Councils should as much as possible raise their own money and justify it to the voters.

I have yet to find out just what parish councils do?

Transparency means UDC, Town and Parish Councils should truly and accurately demonstrate THEIR costs. By hiding a proportion of the costs inflates UDC costs. Whilst the tax payer will pay the same, each council should take full responsibility and accountability for THEIR costs.

This needs to be directed to the recipients to shoulder.

I feel local areas should meet their cuts. These are usually for benefit of their local areas. I am not happy to have costs from other districts charged to my area (precept).

The charge to residents should increase.

Grant for what (why do the P' and T' councils lose money?)?

Yes, because this helps distribute wealth from richer to poorer parts of the district.

Local communities should have authority over their own budgets as well as responsibility.

Parish and Town Councils should raise their own income in order to maintain transparency of operation.

See above.

If an area has a higher proportion then why would local town/parishes suffer.

Again, what does this mean per household. If it is just a few pounds I would be prepared to see the increase to my charges.

But only if this is REALLY financially possible.

My parish council do almost nothing yet take a healthy precept. Let them use that or Uttlesford DC can use the money for other high priority services.

We'll be paying it either way.

My parish council still give money to the church for their fire insurance. Surely if church goes prayed harder, they wouldn't need it! Better still, the church should make the "goers" pay an entry fee, should not be a burden to council tax payers!

Town/Parish councils should pay their own way so we can judge their financial performance.

As Above (" A figure between 20-30% in line with other councils. The subsidy provided by Uttlesford is unaffordable given the need to show austerity") - ultimately tax payer will end up subsidising, wherever the responsibility falls be it Uttlesford / Town / Parish council.

It will hit people somewhere else.

If there is a shortfall in grant availability then other residents should bear the cost.

Town and parish councils should be empowered to set own rates and stand by their decisions.

Town and Parish councils would be more answerable to their residents.

Parishes/towns should have some impact on finances as district

I think the council tax is already enough, over £100pm from each household! Traffic congestion and road states are shocking. The character of the town is being lost by putting as many houses as possible that look like ugly messes.

The money all comes out of the same pockets ultimately, and the present system allows PCCs and town councils to focus "their" budgets on other, more local issues of importance.

The amount should not be increased. To stop the grants then the money would be kept by Uttlesford and disappear into its budget.

Town and Parish residents should pay for what their council spends - and know that they will - local accountability.

Town and Parish residents should pay for what their council spends - and know that they will - local accountability.

The Council should remove the discounted subsidy from 18.5% to 20% and fall in line with other Council's. This will lessen any need to provide grants.

As above, subsidised living is not the way forward, I have worked and saved for my old age and continue to do so.

As above, subsidised living is not the way forward, I have worked and saved for my old age and continue to do so.

It depends on how much the council gives to each council.

By removing part or all of the protection would ensure each parish/town council continued to focus on their local area responsibility to control claimants.

Every household across the district should pay the same rate for each band. It is unclear why these subsidies exist and whether there is any benefit to the region as a result.

Why should my money be taken to other parish councils where it does not benefit me/

Either way the resident still needs to pay. By putting the onus back to Town and Parish level local residents will be more aware of the cost to the town/parish.

Uttlesford needs to be more realistic about budgeting and citizens should be aware of what they have to pay for. Perhaps we should stop funding all unnecessary organisations.

I feel that there needs to be a big shake up. Why does the council need to provide grants. The expenditure for town and parish and district councils need to be looked at!

Depending on what the town/Parish budgets are being use for ?

It's irrelevant how the taxpayer pays for this , They will still have to pay one way or the other.

Bureaucratic nonsense!

Towns and parishes need to appreciate the cost implications of policies and should not be safeguarded

I may have missed something here but I believe the onus should be on town and parish councils to set the precepts they need and work within them. If the grant is phased out it might reduce any pain by spreading it over several years.

why should we

Parish & Town Councils have the ability to raise their own precept and without limits, if they require more funding the money should be raised locally in their boundary and not expect to be topped up by the District as a whole. Where this has gone wrong is Saffron Walden Town Council for example puts Council Tax up to pay for services they have taken on from Uttlesford while also accepting grants.

If town and Parish councils are spending the money they should have to justify the raising of it to the residents at election time

Q4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.

a. Second homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house.

Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct?

If “No”, please explain why.

Responses received

2nd homes should receive discounts of 25% unless they are being used all the time or rented out.

If you have 2 homes in UDC you should receive some discount for the second home.

2nd homes do not use facilities the same as first

People who own a second home should pay 100% council tax on both homes. If they can afford to buy a second home they can afford 100% council tax.

There should be a transitional period to allow for the extended time it takes to sell original home whilst funding second which will become permanent.

If they can afford a 2nd home they can afford the full (or more) amount.

Second homes should be taxed and empty forced to give to poor or needy.

Second homes should pay full council tax

They should still pay full tax.

Start increasing this - e.g. 10% extra...

No . If you have two houses you should've paid the the full amount

I believe 2nd homes should be charged at a higher rate. They are a luxury that doesn't help the current housing shortage.

Second homes are usually a luxury - if people have the means to own one - good luck to them - but they probably have the means to pay the full council tax on the second home.

Tax on second homes should be double empty homes, holiday homes do not add life to the community and should be discouraged, especially during housing shortages.

Most 2nd properties are rented out, therefore, the demands on local services remains the same.

If people can afford a second home they can afford to pay more for it.

Empty home should be exempt after all they are not using any council services.

10% discount to continue.

They don't use the resources so why pay.

They are only using Council services for part of the year.

Second homes should be discouraged unless they are genuine Buy-To-Lets. All other second homes should pay a penal rate of tax say 10%.

People who can afford second homes can also afford to pay full council tax in my view.

Second homes should be charged a higher council tax rate than other houses.

If individuals are wealthy enough to 'own' multiple properties then they cannot expect subsidies in full whack please!

If the owner is actively in process of trying to sell second house then some other scheme is required.

Second homes do not use the same amount of services as first homes.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

Sometimes inherited and there can be many high costs to deep in repair/or suitable for rent (providing a house for a family). Securing, for example, from vandals/squatters can cost home owners a great deal.

Yes, as many of these may be let out as a source of income.

Given the current lack of housing I think owners of second homes should be charged more rather than less council tax, to discourage second home ownership and provide funds to the council to support those who do not have a home.

Second homes should be discouraged by a 200% rate until housing development reaches the level that is required.

Where no occupants then no services required. Second homes - again less occupancy, demand for services are less.

Second homes should be treated the same as a first home and pay 100% council tax.

Some people have worked hard and use the rent from a second home to supplement their state pension so it is unfair to penalise them.

1) Second home users tend to use less services. 2) Second home users contribute to the economy

Should receive a discount as they make less use of services.

A second home owner will be using less local services so should have a discount.

Many times a person with a 2nd home may perhaps had to move because of changing jobs into new area, or perhaps they have had further increase in size of family and needed to move and because of this unable to sell existing home thus leaving it empty.

Second home and empty homes provide employment (gardeners, carers, cleaners).

A second home is not usually using as many services.

If one has a large enough income to buy another house they should certainly be charged the same per house as the rest of us.

People using a second home do not benefit from all the facilities in the same way as two separate families.

I think second homes should pay an increased council tax as they do not contribute as much to the local community and add to housing pressure. So an increase in council tax for them would be fairer to the community as a whole.

Council tax on 2nd homes should be surcharged significantly rather than discounted. Luxuries, such as 2nd homes, should attract a higher level of tax than necessities - ie a let home.

There should be a premium on second home council tax. It may discourage second home ownerships and thus make more housing available.

If they can afford 2nd homes they should pay double on whichever is the dearer!

Council tax could be increased for second home.

Because second homes use the services provided through council tax less eg less rubbish generated. There should be a discount to reflect this.

second and empty homes should have to pay an additional premium - set at a rate double that of occupied dwellings.

I think second homes should pay higher council tax to discourage this to ensure local people can buy 1st home.

It is unfair as owners of second homes generally do not use any of the council services such as refuse collection education etc.

CT should be levied at a rate to discourage 2nd homes in view of chronic housing shortage.

People with a second home should pay HIGHER council tax

People who have worked hard to buy a second home should not have to subsidise people on benefits.

If a household does not use the Council facilities it should have a discount.

Second home owners should pay more because local first time owners cannot afford the rise in price that second home owners bring.

All second home owners should pay "DOUBLE".

By definition a "second home" is not used all the time, so neither are the council's services.

Owner should estimate how much home is used. Council could estimate bin empties. Then estimate discount.

Second homes would tend to have a lesser call on council services. The only reason for charging second homes at (or above) the same level as main residences is to increase council income.

Second homes should incur a charge greater than the charge levied on first homes

If it is legally possible, second homes should attract a council tax surcharge. They should not be charged less than residents.

Owners of second homes should pay at least 150% of the appropriate rateable value of the property. Having a second home means they can afford the increased rate. This should help the less fortunate in society.

Charge 2nd homes / empty homes no discount.

Second home owners should pay full rate.

Each house should pay the same.

Second homes should be charged a premium as for LTE greater than 2years @ an additional 50% . This would act as a disincentive to owners to declare a property as second home when it isn't - + encourage empty property to be brought back to use.

2nd homes should pay 110% - its not us though the owners are needy.

It is their choice to have a second home so should pay.

The concept of providing a council tax discount on second homes is reasonable and should be reinstated. This principal applies in many other areas of life/commerle.

People who have second homes should sell them so that familys can move in when they have no where else to go.

The second home is not utilising as many services as the first.

However, if it was put up to say 110% it may get people to sell their second homes and increase the stocks available for sale.

A second home should not receive a discount

Second homes ara luxury. If someone can afford a second home, they can pay tax.

If they are rich enough to own two houses they are rich enough to pay full tax if not a surcharge on top.

You should not charge for a service you are not providing - 10% is not much, but at least its something.

Unless there is a clear need for work or educational demands, second home should be surcharged (50%)

There should be some link between occupation of property and cost i.e. an empty property requires less in the way of council services.

TEST

There are various reasons for people having second homes. A small rebate is a fair reflection of the reduced call on local services.

It is unfair that second home owners, who are already paying full council tax on their main home, should have to pay the full rate of council tax on a second home. The property owner probably makes very little use of the local services relating to the second home, and should receive an appropriate discount.

If you can afford a second home a 10% discount on council tax is unlikely to make any difference to whether or not a second home is purchased.

it will use less services

b. Empty homes undergoing major repair

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs?

If you have answered "No", what should be used and why?

Responses received

Six months should be adequate

No discount should be offered. This would encourage rapid completion + deter those waiting for the property values to rise

Residents who are wealthy enough own two homes should pay the full tax on all homes. Why are wealthy people given any discounts?

If a home is undergoing repair it should not take more than 12 months. Therefore I believe a discount should only be given for the first 12 months. There are too many empty homes not being used / rented out.

We feel it should be 50% for 6 months so that properties will be completed.

I think an empty property undergoing major repair should be free at 100% for the first 6 months and then at 50% for the next 6 months. After all someone is bringing a property up to date and making housing improvements, bringing what could only be a derelict property back to life usually for someone else's benefit. I will encourage them to do it quicker.

An empty home does not mean UDC services and costs

Yes - if it really is undergoing repairs and the work is completed in 12 months. Otherwise deliberately empty - no discount should be allowed.

12 months is too long.

Reduce to 50% for six months or until a Planning application is approved whichever is the sooner. Then another six months following approval, to encourage builders to get on with it. What about properties which are left to decay for a long time e.g. Three Colls on Cambridge Road Stansted

No facilities used should mean no charge.

Rate should be 50% discount for up to six months as this is a realistic timeframe in which to renovate a property.

Surely 50% for 6 months is adequate?

should be 25% for 6 months. If the owner can afford major repairs which take say 6 months to complete they can afford the extra council tax.

Because refurbished properties are a benefit to the community.

Costs are so high.

There is too much possibility of manipulation of the time taken.

12 months is too long 6 months should be long enough for most major repairs.

As a landlord 100% for 6 months would be better. Using an estate agent for management in Chelmsford only 3 months is allowed.

Should be no discount.

Why can't it be treated simply as 'empty'?

I don't think these should be any discount on empty homes undergoing repair.

If people can't afford to renovate a property and pay charges maybe they shouldn't start the project.

I think 100% for 6 months is better. Many families take time to clear and sort out houses when a parent dies. Having to pay Council tax for an extra property as well as their own can be a burden.

The discount should be 25%. Most improvements are to increase market value.

As above

No discount

There should not be any empty homes

. Should be 100% for 6 months and 50% for next 6 months (if needed). To encourage faster repairs/ property to be brought back into use sooner.

Reduce to 25% it should not take 12 months to make a property habitable. After 12 months it should be NIL.

Yes for discount but time period should be 6 months. Surely most work should be completed in that time.

do not know (understand)

Reduced to 25% for 12 months as these properties are often sold within a few years at a hefty profit.

Surely a house unergoing major repairs can be completed with 12m. Therefore I would say 100% discount for 6m and 50% for second 6m

I believe this should be reduced to 6 months

Should be part of the cost of developing home. Full tax should be paid.

If the owner do not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!

50% for six months.

When the work is finished, the property will have increased in value giving the owner a tax free increase. He/she will then charge a bigger rent if applicable.

if the home is empty due to accidental/fire damage the reduction should be 100% until repairs are completed. if the house is being improved or developed for profit there should be no reduction.

No discount should be given to encourage the house to be ready as soon as possible.

The only exception to this should be if a property has become uninhabitable, e.g. due to a fire, when the discount should still be 100%.

In order not to penalise people buying run-down properties i think that if they intend to live in the property then the 1st 6 months should be 0%, the 2nd, 50% then 100% after that.

Developers/second home buyers etc should pay 100% from the start.

Property pays tax always: if any property remains empty for 6 months then discount applies if property is updated/repaired for 6 months. After any property empty for more than 6 months a premium above tax of 25% applies. For 6 months then 50% thereafter.

Empty homes needing major repairs need to be renovated and lived in people need to be encouraged to use these properties to stop slums forming, giving full discount will encourage the take up of empty homes.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

No discount should be given, if a house needs repair it is still an asset to the owner. Houses increase in value - TAX should be paid.

This could be used as a play to evade tax. 12 months is too long to renovate a house.

Six months should be absolutely enough for any single dwelling repairs - you can build a whole house in less than that time!

The level of discount (%) is too generous. The percentage should be around 20%.

We want homes to be repaired so why penalise them for doing so.

6 months encourages land owners to get the work done quickly and re let.

6 months encourages land owners to get the work done quickly and re let.

I do not agree that this level of tax should be placed on these houses as it is very expensive doing renovation work and after as in my case I am paying tax on a rented home.

I do not object to the discount for home empty due to being uninhabitable e.g. flood or fire. I do not object to a discount for second homes that may fall into the empty homes undergoing major repairs category or investment properties.

Yes- Assuming property is fully unoccupied if it is occupied whilst undergoing major repair then no discount.

Every house should pay 100% even if empty.

It should be possible to arrange repairs within 6 months.

There should be a further sliding scale whereupon the property should receive a discount of 50% for 3 months not 6 months to incentivise quick turnaround work.

So long as the total discounted period is no more than 24 months.

The reason may be a factor i.e. because of flooding - structural damage - should be taken into account.

The area is very desirable so renovation should pay for itself no need for subsidies should be 25% max.

If work is not complete within the initial 12 months discount period then 100% tax should apply. If not occupied after 24 months then a penal rate of 150% should apply.

I also think there should be certain cases that are reviewed on their own merit.

This expense should be planned for - along with major repairs.

Major repair will often take at least 12 months including obtaining permissions etc, and will increase the values of the property to enable higher valuation of council tax, therefore no charge should be incurred for first 12 months followed by full 100% after this period. As no services are being used.

Would reduce further to 30% discount.

A fairer way would be to support property developers to carry out their work quicker. So, 100% discount for 6 months, 25% for next 6 months.

Not quite sure I understand this * explanation it shouldn't cost the council any more money. 25% discount for 6 months for empty houses going through repairs. There's a housing shortage, why should people have a house empty and get such a generous discount for such a long time, when repairs are made???

This is simply a punitive tax on home-owners. Suggest 50% after 6 months with first 6 months free.

6 Months is a reasonable period to complete major repairs - 100% over 6 months would better motivate the completion of work at no loss of revenue to UDC (100% over 6 months same as 50% over 12 months).

Builders can hit snags and hold up repairs but I feel tax payers should not have to underwrite private property.

If a home is empty, it doesn't need to 'receive' any local services.

Too generous

In my view a 50% discount for 6 months is sufficient.

100% for 12 months is excessive. 50% more realistic but why give any concession.

12 months is a high length of time and people need to get a move on. Reducing it to 6 months would focus attention on getting work on house done.

The definition of 'undergoing major works' is too vague. This may merely be a ruse to hold the property whilst upgrading and awaiting rises in property values. The disruption to nearby residents is also not considered. Maximise income and decrease subsidies!

Investing in property seems to be a national hobby, why does it need to be treated as a special case? Dustbins still need emptying, streets cleaned, old people protected etc.

100% for 12 months - the upgrading work to our house took over 9 months.

I believe that major repairs/restoration particularly of historic properties can take much longer than even 12 months due to nature and size of the buildings and shortage of companies fully competent to undertake such work. Also horrors come to light once work starts!

Should be 100% for 6 months being that the property is not inhabitable.

But I think this can be changed if genuine major repair works happening.

If no-one is living in the home, no one is using any of the council amenities. So the discount should be 100%. At the same time the repairs will provide a home of good standard.

12 months is too long and encounters repairs to be delayed 6 months is more realistic to allow planning and repairs.

It depends on the repairs. Some are bound to take over 6 months

There should be some flexibility for exceptional cases only - for instance if an important archaeological find beneath the property.

It should remain at 100%, so long as it is owner-occupied, and the owner has to move out while repairs are going on.

I consider 6 months should be adequate for repairs to be carried out.

If you own property you should pay 100% tax all the time.

Why is the property needing major repairs? It means that the property has been neglected over the years and what is to stop the property being left open and not occupied in the future? These landlords should be made to let the property.

A major repair can take more than 6 months - a 12 month timescale seems fair. As the homeowner is investing in updating and improving the property, they should not be penalised for doing so. A 100% discount for 12 months is fair.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

Should be 100% for 1st 12 months to help the house owner (not property developer) to repair the house to live in /sell/or let. We found this very beneficial when we had major repairs on our own Grade II listed building.

Should be 100% as sometimes extensive maintenance / alterations, updating is nowadays very expensive

If the home is empty, what services are they paying for?

Because if they can afford major repairs they can afford to pay council tax at the same rate as everyone else - major facilities e.g. water, sewage, rubbish collection, roads to and from will all be used just the same.

I agree providing planning applications are dealt with more speedily.

Presumably a large proportion of recipients of this discount are builders and developers - and this seems hardly fair. It should be reduced or discontinued if there are professional builders or developers involved.

I do not understand the question

A house is a house. This is a loophole that should be closed. All houses should be subject to the same tax level. Houses are often empty because of speculation and speculators should not be subsidised.

If uninhabitable then no user so not making use of any council provision so shouldn't pay at all. Could shorten time period to max 6 months to encourage return to market.

100% discount for 6 months would give a greater incentive to complete major repairs/refurbishment, without any change to the cost of the scheme to the council.

6 mths should be more than adequate

I would propose a 50% reduction for 6 months

Every effort should be made to bring property back into housing stock. This includes financial assistance to do it.

It may encourage owners to delay completing the repairs for 18 months/2 years

Increasing the amount of discount is no incentive to getting work done. Decrease the discount to 15% and work would be done and more homes for people would follow.

50% (or less) for 6 months might provide an incentive for getting on with the work.

Some people have worked hard and use the rent from a second home to supplement their state pension so it is unfair to penalise them.

Should be 100% for 6 months then 50% for a further 6 months, as a major refurbishment can be subject to delays.

I consider the time span should be reduced to 6 months.

Most people doing major repairs have to live somewhere else and pay for that, not always by choice.

12.5% is fair in time like this but first time buyer should get more help 50% as long as they undertake to live in finist house 10 years.

Should be 100% for 12 months - better to improve properties and invest in them, than build new ones.

I feel it should be 100% discount if the home is uninhabitable. Perhaps a sliding scale of 100% for 6 months 50% for 6 months.

it should be means tested. Couples under 40 should get 100% discount. Over 40s should get 50% discount.

There should be no discount. Firstly, the property is using council services while being repaired (Police, roads, fire brigade, planning department). Secondly, paying full council tax will encourage to make the property habitable as soon as possible.

There should be no discount on empty properties unless they are up for sale.

But should be reviewed annually to see if it is still appropriate.

It depends on who owns the property and why it is empty. Say a family home burns down compared to a landlord speculation on price hikes etc.

But only provided it is undergoing major repairs.

A empty house is using no council services so should no pay anything.

12 months is too long. Keep the discount as 50% but for 9 months as incentive to get work finished quickly and bring houses back into use.

I agree with the level of discount but feel that a discount for 6 months only would be fair. No house need take longer than this to repair.

If you buy a house you should expect to pay council tax on it!

The discount should be 50% for the first three months and nil thereafter.

First 3 months = no council tax. Second 3 months = 50% to pay. After 6 months = 100% to pay.

It will not take 1 year to major repairs. I think this should be reduced from 12 months to 6 months.

Should be 50% for 6 months or 25% for 12 months.

An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council service are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it.

50% for 12 months, there after NO discount.

Should be 50% for 6 months so that the premises are brought back into use earlier.

Suggest that as soon as discount application is received that a building inspector is sent to access the timescale needed for reasonable completion and thus set the period for which the discount shall apply.

There is no cost to the Council if no-one lives there, so why not 100%? We want empty homes repairs and brought back into use.

Should be reduced to 6 months. Builders and investors are the main beneficiaries.

Make it 25% we need all empty homes to be occupied asap. It would concentrate minds.

If undergoing repairs should not pay any tax.

We agree with this but houses that have are 'Listed' could remain as the 12 months because getting permission for the changes can take some time so no work can/dared be done!

Empty homes should be back in use as soon as possible.

Sometimes it takes more than six months to repair a building especially if it is a sensitive listed property.

There should be no discount.

50% for 6 months. Most major repairs can be completed in that time.

If a property is uninhabitable due to major works, no one is using the facilities for which council tax is levied i.e. schools, street lighting, refuse collection etc. and therefore no charge should be expected for the first 12 months. We have been made aware that police will not attend burglaries from inhabited properties so not even policing will cover empty properties.

A property that has been neglected for many years before new ownership could take a long time to be made properly habitable.

6 months for major repairs is reasonable.

12 months is adequate for major repairs.

Provided renovations are really being done.

Empty houses cost money and deprive people in need of a possible home. The % should be decreased to 25% and the time period to 3 months. Owners (esp Buy to Let owners) should be made to be efficient.

It should 100% from the off when sold to developers etc

Depends on the reason for major repairs eg if due to flooding/fire beyond the owners circumstances the amount should be reviewed, as the persons involved will have to pay tax on the property they are renting.

Should be 100% for six months, then 50% for the next six months. After that, full payment.

If a property requires major repairs it will need to be empty and the owners would need to live elsewhere while work was undertaken. They would be paying council tax where they lived.

What is 'major repair' - can people use this as a loop-hole. Two years seems a long time for a major repair.

Major repair, especially after a collapse or other failure, can take a long time to be agreed with insurers etc. From personal experience this can take more than 12 months.

Major repairs may take up to 12 months and a 100% discount should be applied.

- but maximum period should be 12 months and a review should be made to see if owner is using 50% worth of council tax service. If not should go up to nearer 100% discount.

The timescale should be reduced to six months after which the full tax should be paid.

Should stay the same to encourage owners not to leave empty when so many people are

needing a home.

Allowance should be made for extenuating circumstances beyond an owner's control.

6 months is appropriate not a year.

6 months is appropriate not a year.

Major repairs could well for 'old' ie listed properties exceed 12 months. Repairs to listed properties should receive full discount.

CT should be levied at a rate to ensure that contractors proceed expediently. Discount only for 6 months.

As long as they are not accessing rubbish collection!

No tax should be paid on an empty property.

Because property developers are pricing families/young people out of the market. They are in no rush to complete their work and already make a fortune in profit. Pay 100%!

Repairs can take longer than planned.

If nobody is living in the property they will be having to live somewhere else (usually nearby) where they will be paying council tax. They will not require double the services of the council so should only have to pay once. Hence I believe the 100% discount for a maximum of a year is suitable, not 50%.

If only 25% given to solo residents - if you can afford to renovate a house you should be able to afford to pay council tax.

I think if a property is rendered uninhabitable by natural causes i.e. flood, fire etc. it should be council tax exempt. If it then becomes an unaffordable liability to the owner the council should fund restoration, then reclaim on their insurance!

Again, if the house is not occupied, council services are not being used. Rate should be 100% discount but perhaps for only six months unless it can be shown works have been delayed for unavoidable reasons.

The 50 % level should be reduced to 6 months.

Often difficult to carry out major repairs quickly - especially on listed buildings. Unfair to charge people for a property they cannot use.

50% for 6 months would be better.

The period of discount should be limited to 6 months or less. This would encourage property repairs to be completed asap and properties available to rent/sold

The wording should read “undergoing repairs prior to re-occupation”

For landlords declaring a property under repair could be used to dodge paying council tax, therefore reduce the % and timescale.

50% discount for 6 months feels fairer. Any major repair should be complete inside 6 months. Why should the council over-subsidise people gaining additional wealth from developing 2nd homes?

I do believe that repairs should be able to be effected in 6 months. I think the discount should be 100% for 6 months. After all an empty property is not using council resources.

It encourages people to buy old properties to improve otherwise there will be lots of derelict houses.

Major repairs are seldom undertaken by the poorer groups and 6 months should be the limit.

The discount should be reduced to 6 months to encourage owners to repair their property.

Charge full amount

Empty homes should be liable for 100% of council tax.

If they have the money to carry out the work they have the money to pay 100% of the tax these are not poor people.

It should be 100% discount for 2 months then minimum of 50% from 3 months, then after 12 months full amount due.

6 months is long enough to sort problems - longer people have the less they will be motivate to sort.

A property may be occupied whether or not major repairs are ongoing. Also C Tax is a property tax and not a poll tax. Hence just because it is undergoing repairs should not entitle it to a reduced rate of C. Tax.

Difficult to answer the question without definition of ‘major’ + without understating how burden of proof is managed, but the decision by the owner to renovate is a function of commercial decision(e.g. +rent/price will rise) + therefore ‘50% for 12 months’ is too generous. Suggest 10% for 6-12 months.

A reduction would be an increase in Council funds. A discount of 10% would ensure the repair work is carried out quickly and housing made available.

But should only be to a maximum period of say one year or eighteen months

Treat as a second home, therefore no discount.

50% for 6 months - as 6 months is long enough for a refurbishment.

Depends on circumstances. Ok as long as major repairs have a time limit and major repairs are being completed so that house is habitable and intends to be lived in.

The cost of empty property should be the same as an occupied one at all times.

Six months should be adequate

25% for 6 months to encourage re-occupation sooner.

Need to prevent people from sitting on houses. Why not give 75% discount for first 3/12, then reduce to 50% for 3/12 with final reduction of 25% for remaining 6/12. Houses need to be lived in - if not sold or rented out - don't subsidise people who sit on property! (developers and landlords).

Cannot assess this properly in the absence of any definition of what constitutes a 'major' repair.

Most homes undergoing major repairs refurbishing is to the benefit of developers and speculators.

Six months should be adequate

Six months should be adequate

If homes are in need of major repair then the CT payer should not have to pay while the works are on going ie 100% relief/discount should be applied for 6 months.

If it is for living in.

If somebody has the financial means to undertake significant renovation then they can find the money to pay council tax. This money will typically just remain in the hands of small property developers.

There are too many costs involved already without adding further burden. This will deter many developers.

The full council tax should be charged for all homes left empty for longer than 12 months. This would encourage the owneres to complete the repairs and make a home habitable in a more timely manner.

If the property cannot be occupied it should not attract tax for 12 months. The owners presumably pay tax on their temporary accommodation. If not should do so.

Should only be 50%. Even an empty property still needs fire and police cover.

Need to encourage landlords to improve the quantity and quality of properties in the Borough. If a scheme genuinely takes longer than 12 months Council Tax should not be charged. It should be charged if it is empty for any other reason than a normal void 9 i.e. 2-3 months between tenancies)

Empty homes should be charged council tax.

Should go back to 100% - if they're not living in the house while it has repairs - they're not using services.

No use of council services is being sought if the property is empty.

Make CT simple - every home pays it whatever the circumstances. May encourage people to speed up renovations and get house back into use.

Discount should balance with CT discounts given i.e. 20% for 12 m.

They should pay full tax. That will teach them to bring the property back into use asap.

Newcastle City Council is 100% for six months. Why do you always want to charge?

If you can afford to buy and renovate a home you should be liable to pay the council tax in full.

50% for 6 months would encourage landlords to facilitate repairs. There could be a process to apply for an extension in exceptional circumstances.

If discount was reinstated at 100% (for 12 months) it would be a better incentive to get run-down properties back on to the sales/rental market to ease the housing shortage

100% discount for six months would give a stronger incentive to planning the work thoroughly beforehand . Before moving out and executing the work swiftly, subsequently.

Reduce to 30% for 6 months . Too many empty properties which are deteriorating.

Those undertaking renovation and repairs are increasing the value of the properties .Empty houses should be taxed the same as those occupied to ensure they return to the market ASAP.

A reduced time scale that leaves properties empty for a shorter time.

Restore the 100% discount, the property is being improved and may provide housing in the future.

I don't think that it would be unreasonable to reduce the period to 9 months (keeping the discount at 50% as an incentive for work to start on a property and to be completed in a timely fashion. I think 50% for 6 months is fair with a simple appeal process (backed by architect's/surveyors reports).

50% discount for 9 months

12 months seems reasonable for major repairs, but paying as much as 50% for a home you can't live in does not. I think the percentage discount should be increased to 75% at least.

Empty properties are often refurbished and repaired by property developers and I believe they should bear more of the cost.

100% for six months

Should be 100% for 6 months. Do not see why major repairs should take longer than 6 months if properly project managed. Only fair to give 100% if property uninhabitable.

TEST

Six months would be better

It would be better to halve the cost by halving the duration, not the %age. If one's house is rendered uninhabitable, it's wrong to be charged a tax for the services provided to inhabited houses, so a 100% reduction is appropriate (and softens the blow of losing one's house), but 6 months should be enough to make arrangements.

Some time ago I was fortunate to inherit an almost derelict house. It took almost one year to receive planning permission for the renovation and rebuilding work. It is totally wrong that the owner of such a property should have to pay Council Tax when the house is uninhabitable, and renovation cannot commence because the Councils Planning department will not approve the plans!

A 50% discount should only last 6 months, this will encourage properties not to remain empty for long periods.

I don't see why any discount should be applied at all.

The time period should be reduced to 6 months, this will give more incentive to complete any major repairs. Too many properties appear to remain empty for long periods of time when the lack of housing is at such a high level.

There is huge money and wealth in the property development market in this District. Developers and homeowners can easily afford the Council Tax, so why should they be exempt? Homes are sold for large profits in this area and is a lucrative business, we shouldn't be propping up the free market with support.

I think it would be better to give 100% discount for 6 months. When properties need a major refurbishment this would be an incentive to get them done within 6 months

the owners should still pay 100% council tax even though the property is empty

If a home is empty and unliveable due to major repairs, I would prefer the discount to increase (perhaps to 100% as it previously was)

The housing stock is improved if people do repairs and they shouldn't be penalised for doing so

c. Empty homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs?

If "No", please explain why.

Responses received

No discount should be offered and a positive rate introduced to encourage the return of the property to the housing market

As with question b) above. Local taxation should apply uniformly. Repairing houses cannot justify lower taxes

If a home is undergoing repair it should not take more than 12 months. Therefore I believe a discount should only be given for the first 12 months. There are too many empty homes not being used / rented out.

To release property back to open market in time of housing shortage.

Should the housing market slow down again a renew may be necessary. The house of a deceased person could take longer than 6 months to sell.

50% for 3 months sufficient - there should be no empty homes in Uttlesford

No discount. Too many empty homes

Should be 9 months at 50%. If it's a probate case it should be free.

An empty home does not mean UDC services and costs

There should be no discount for empty homes given the shortage of available properties to purchase.

If a house is empty due to death of the occupant, probate can take a long time to come through and then to sell the property for the estate may also take time. It is unreasonable for an estate to

pay tax on uninhabited property due to death. The rate should return to 100% for 6 months. My view is that each case needs to be reviewed as I am sceptical as to why properties are empty.

No discount should be allowed

There should be a strong dis-incentive to keeping properties empty

This time should be reduced.

Properties should be renovated within a certain time.

Be fair to landlords who are not using facilities.

50% for 3 months.

3-4 months would seem more reasonable. 6 months is a long time for a house in reasonable condition to be empty.

Discount to be phased out completely.

If a home is empty and no attempt to regenerate or to let is so, then a possible home for a desperate tenant is not going to happen and anyone able to own a empty home and not do anything to change this can afford to pay more.

Should be 25% for 6 months. An incentive to move the property on - let/sell etc.

Can make more than 6 months to sell or arrange tenancy.

I believe some people are unable to pay.

See the answer above. Also some pressure to bring empty property into use is valid.

With a shortage of housing stock there should be a stronger incentive for houses not to remain empty. A lower discount is more appropriate.

3 months is long enough to find a new tenant especially at present with short age of suitable rented properties.

As an encouragement to use the property should get no discount.

There is a housing shortage therefore an empty home is a waste and burden. It should not receive any reduction - encouraging fill occupancy at all times.

Should be no discount.

Why can't it be treated simply as 'empty'?

I don't think these should be any discount on empty homes.

Empty homes need to be filled there are lots of homeless people so it might encourage people to move faster if there are no discounts.

If the house remains empty, with no evidence of effort to sell undergo major repair, then they should pay full council tax. The house shouldn't sit empty.

Not sure empty homes owned by Council should be repaired asap.

For the same reason as above (Many families take time to clear and sort out houses when a parent dies. Having to pay Council tax for an extra property as well as their own can be a burden). It also depends on whether the family had to move for work reasons and cannot immediately find a buyer. There needs to be discretion written into these rules.

no discount should be given, there is a nationwide shortage of housing, this 'no discount' should encourage owners to get these houses occupied.

The discount should be 25%

No discount

3 months is better incentive

. 3 months should be at 100%, 3 months at 50% and 3 months at 25%, again to encourage properties to be brought into occupation sooner.

Reduce to 25% it should not take 12 months to make a property habitable. After 12 months it should be NIL.

C. Tax should relate to the person using the services not the home.

Should reduce time to 3 months except for service personnel or people in hospital or like.

Empty properties should be sold or rented ASAP. Reduce discount to 10% and start from 2 months.

Reduce to 50% for 3 months

Do not know (understand)

But no more than 6 months

Why should there be a discount? The owners should ensure their property is lived in.

Reduction was too small - should be 25% to encourage owners to take some action. Also why not 12 months instead of 6 as other types.

With the current housing shortage I believe 3 months is sufficient for a tenant to be found or house to be sold

Should be part of the cost of developing home. Full tax should be paid.

If the owner do not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!

No tax discount for houses left empty.

i see no reason why, if a property is vacant, the rest of us should pay more.

If a house is empty or full, the cost to the council is the same, if not undergoing major repairs then the house is fit to be rented/sold so therefore should not be subject to a discount.

I would suggest 50% fr up to 12 months remaining empty many properties become empty on the death of the sole resident. Six months is nowhere near long enough to prepare a property for sale and find a buyer at a fair price.

Houses empty due to bereavement/illness or family crisis should be at the 50% for 6 months rate, otherwise no discount should be applied.

Empty house should not stay empty for longer than one month to check repairs.

No discount should be given to encourage the house to be occupied as soon as possible there are too many empty houses.

It should be 0% to pay for the 1st month, then 50% for next 2 months, then 100%. That avoids penalising house buyers doing urgent but minor repairs and families where elderly parents living alone have to move out suddenly.

No discount. Property pays tax or council apply for order to set unpaid tax against sale price. Council should always intervene if property empty for more than 24 months.

Empty properties should receive no discount and if not occupied within a certain time should be subject to a compulsory purchase order.

See 4.

Should get no discount then perhaps they would sell them or rent them out instead of leaving them empty to rot or be squatted etc.

If owner deceased then ok. If just left empty owner should pay something.

Cannot see why there should be any discount at all.

They should pay the full amount as there are many people who need a house or home.

Especially local people.

Unsure. If the house is empty due to death you should not have to pay. If it is an empty rental property - should pay the full amount.

An empty house is an asset, and should pay tax even if it is not occupied.

The house has any excuse to remain empty for any length of time. If the rent is too high making it stay empty, then reduce the rent and pay the correct amount of tax.

Three months should be sufficient for minor repairs and decoration and finding new tenants. If someone can afford a house they don't live in, even during that 3 months discount should only be 50%.

Should be reduced to 3 months considering the national shortage of houses.

Depending on circumstances the discount should be removed.

Again, no more than 20% for 6 months.

There should be no excuse for delaying repairs to getting the property habitable.

Chances are that the home is empty due to a bereavement (death) and so you are putting increased burden on those left. Could be empty due to hospital illness.

This could be reduced to 3 months to encourage landlords to relet asap.

As above, I do not object in the case of hardship e.g. repossession, domestic violence but I do object in the case of second homes and investment properties.

I would prefer 100% for 3 months only to encourage properties to become occupied after 3 months.

As above.

It depends on the reason for the property being empty. If, for example, the owner has died it may take more than 6 months to sell the property.

If someone has an empty property, quite often by choice reduction to 3 months should be sufficient.

As above. Noting Hastings Council had an issue with poor quality beachfront housing. To the extent mandatory purchase orders could be imposed to force landlords to undergo repairs and thereby ease their immigration housing issue. In short order.

If it's not undergoing major repair, wouldn't this be a second home and taxable as such?

No empty property not undergoing repair pay 100%.

There should be 0% discount for empty homes not undergoing major repairs. There should be no advantage for leaving a home empty.

Again the reason: - i.e. empty thro Death should matter. If house on market - funds may not be available.

If a landlord cannot get a tenant for upto 6 months, he should not pay rates on an empty property. I think a discount of 100% for 6 months is fair.

Should be 25% MAX as current encourages empty homes.

If a house is empty, habitable and not being renovated then NO discount should be given if empty more than 24 months a penalty rate should apply at 200%.

I think there should be AT BEST a token discount on empty property. Again, I believe certain cases should be reviewed on their own merit (ie: owner deceased); all properties should be subject to CT - even if empty, the property needs the immediate area maintained.

If citizens can afford a second home and leave it empty then they should be charged the full amount. This may encourage them to return it to use again. Empty home are bad for the community.

Housing is in short supply. If the house is empty for no good reason the full council charge should apply.

I still feel that owners of empty properties should pay council tax as the rest of us do. We should not be encouraging people to keep properties empty by giving them reductions.

Demand for property (rental) is high so Landlords are unlikely to leave properties empty. I have property in London Boroughs and there is 0% discount for it being empty! This is harsh, I think it should be 100% for 3 months.

Abolish the reduction as an incentive to speed up the works.

If house is empty for 6 months, max of 10% discount, after that full council tax. There's a housing shortage, why should people leave houses empty and get discount in council tax anyway????

Suggest as above N4b. ie first 6 months free @ 100%, then 50% for further 6 months.

Empty homes could be let so full council tax could be paid or if not 3 months is better not 6 or 12. No discount should be allowed. This would encourage landlords to ensure that houses are not left vacant.

Maybe a month - one month - no more!

Difficult to answer - probably depends on circumstances surrounding reason for empty property (although a scheme whereby different circumstances received different discount would be difficult to administer.)

This will then provide an incentive for renting out or selling at the earliest opportunity.

Where an empty property is empty following bereavment is under probate a 'period of grace' seems reasonable and the existing discount likewise. However for any other reasons seems to be merely speculative on the part of the owner and no discount should be applied.

Similar comments to a) and b) above.

I have been clearing a large house for over a year. The house has been in the family for almost 100 years and everything needs to be gone through. One cannot work, visit elderly relatives in homes 25 miles away and be clearing the house in a hurry.

There should be no discount of any type for empty homes and I feel that even the new 50% for 6 months is a waste of tax payers money.

Think it should return to 100% for 6 months from personal experience, mortgage still has to be paid on empty home. Paying council tax makes things even more difficult for owner, i.e. inherited property with mortgage still to be paid. When that person living in rented property and already paying one lot of council tax.

If a house does not need major repairs it should be inhabited. There should be no discount. Uttlesford has a housing crisis.

If a property is genuinely empty because of Bereavement or families moving abroad they should be given 100% disc for 12 months and 50% discount for a further 6 months.

Empty homes, without a valid reason should pay full council tax.

Owners of empty properties need to be encouraged to keep their properties in use. A heavier penalty should be imposed to ensure this.

But only in the case of awaiting probate on administration.

I think if you own a property one should pay 100% tax all the time.

No discount should be given, it only encourages landlords to keep the property unoccupied.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

6 months. no longer. It may be the house is empty due to a parent's death and families are trying to sort out the parent's affairs.

If a property does not need major repairs 25% discount for 6 mths should help to get it back into occupation.

Still, what services are they paying for?

Because if they can afford major repairs they can afford to pay council tax at the same rate as everyone else - major facilities e.g. water, sewage, rubbish collection, roads to and from will all be used just the same.

Similar criteria to the answer above. Council tax payers in general should not have to fund the activities of developers/builders, aiming to buy and then sell at a profit at a time to suit themselves.

Incentive to get repairs done.

The discount should be less than 50% other than in the event of a sole resident's death and a 6-12 month 50% discount should apply to give the estate time to be settled.

I do not understand the question

Speculators should not be subsidised.

I think the council should be allowed to use empty properties for short lets. They would then receive the council tax from the tenants.

It should be 200% to discourage empty houses and get them back in use after a reasonable time, say a year.

Too many people looking for homes. This allows for houses to stay empty at no cost. Cut the discount.

Only OK if property is passed as part of a deceased estate. Otherwise 200% level (as in 4a above) should apply.

It may take families this long to settle wills/probate/sale following a death.

I would advocate reducing this discount to encourage properties to be filled as promptly as possible.

Empty homes are a sin when people are homeless or in need. No discount should be given and owners should be forced to let or sell empty houses.

Empty homes should not receive any discounts as it contradicts the housing crisis. It should be the responsibility of the empty home owner to populate it, therefore taking some pressure off the new build market.

I'm not sure it is correct. Serious consideration should be given to reducing both discount and timescale.

If the property has been advertised but has not tenanted for the period, Council tax should not be paid. If it is vacant because owners are absent (e.g. holiday home) then it is fair to charge a council tax of 50%.

Timescale should be shorter. A house empty for 6 months could be rented out.

Full council tax to be paid

Need discretionary exemptions for people with long-term sickness or need to go into care. 100% discount for 12 months would be appropriate in these cases.

If the percentage and timescale were reduced it might encourage rental or sale of the property. Thereby assisting the housing shortage.

Empty properties should receive no discount. Should be charged at 100%

Although I do agree for the sake of funding the scheme, it is very helpful to not have the worry of paying council tax on an empty property at times of bereavement, when probate is being dealt with.

Depends why they are empty. Should be more if empty due to someone in care.

They should not be empty.

There should be no discount. Firstly, the property is using council services while being repaired (Police, roads, fire brigade, planning department). Secondly, paying full council tax will encourage to make the property habitable as soon as possible.

There should be no discount on empty properties unless they are up for sale.

The owner of empty property should pay 50% rate from outset. This providing a greater incentive to get the property back in occupancy.

Properties with no attempt to improve/sell for e.g. residential occupation should pay the full amount.

Reduce to 50% for three months only

It could be reduced further to encourage occupancy / re-occupancy (say to 25% for 6 months) and to discourage property ownership solely for investment in bricks and mortar/land.

As above. (It depends on who owns the property and why it is empty.) No discounts as a rule.

There are housing shortages in the UK. No house should be empty for no reason.

Then after 6 months NO reduction in Council Tax (as also applies to second homes) until after 2 yrs Council Tax become 150%.

Whether people have empty houses or not should be up to them not you. It's like saying, I have to drive my car!

Reduce this to 40% for six months. With housing in short supply there should be no encouragement to leave property empty unless subject to probate delays.

If people own houses they should pay the council tax whether the house is used or not. I consider the time should be reduced to 3 months.

Why should the owner of an empty house receive any discounts?

Many times a person with a 2nd home may perhaps had to move because of changing jobs into new area, or perhaps they have has further increase in size of family and needed to move and because of this unable to sell existing home thus leaving it empty.

As above if you own a property you should pay for it.

The discount should be 50% for the first three months and nil thereafter.

First 3 months = No council tax giving time to find tenants. After that 100% to pay. There shouldn't be empty homes with people desperate for housing.

It should be bought down to 0 months. The fire brigade will still come out to an empty house.

An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council service are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it.

50% for the first 6 months only. This should ensure home owner/landlord seek a tenant.

Should be 50% for 3 months so that the premises are now allowed to deteriorate and left empty.

'Yes' in so far as stated but (1) 50% discount should be extended in cases of complicated probate and (2) Rate should be increased by increments of 50% for every 6 months over 12 months of the property remaining empty.

As above. Homes may be between tenants for a short time. How about 100% for one month?

Make it 25% we need all empty homes to be occupied asap. It would concentrate minds.

There should be no discount at all for these homes.

There should be no discount.

For completely empty houses I consider that one month is sufficient time to find a tenant or put the property on the market.

50% for 3 months. With the housing crisis all properties ought to be lived in.

It takes an inordinate amount of time to sort out Probate and subsequently to dispose of a property and as no one is in that property using the facilities for which council tax is levied, it is unfair to penalise those who are trying to organise everything whilst grieving for the lost relative/friend.

In the case of a death a house can take considerably longer to empty and market than 6 months (experience x2)

Reduce it further in view of the shortage of housing abolish the discount all together?

Time period should be 3 months only to encourage letting at reasonable market rates.

I can see no reason for any discount whatsoever.

See above. NO discount should be allowed.

See above

In the case of death if the property cannot be sold the people involved may not be able to afford council tax in an empty property.

I would like this to be the same as an empty house with repairs. If there are no residents in the property there should be a discount for a year.

It does not give the property owner sufficient time to deal with the property.

100% for six months seems reasonable for a short period.

If a property is empty and no attempt is being made to refurbish/rent then there should be no discount.

It may take up to 6 months to find a suitable occupant for a property a 100% discount should be applied.

Properties in this category should pay the same as 2nd home owners.

I do not think empty homes should receive a discount. People need homes and the owner should pay full council tax or rent the house to someone in need of housing.

People should not be encouraged to leave homes empty. After 3 months they should pay double the standard rate.

To discourage owners to get on with any work needed so they can be lived in

Full tax should be payable as this will encourage sale or use of property.

However perhaps the CT charge should be 200% after 24 months to encourage properties to be brought into occupation because of the chronic housing shortage.

If they can afford to keep it empty they can afford to pay council tax. I suggest 50% for 3 months not six.

No tax should be paid on an empty property.

An empty home is no benefit to the community

In circumstances where the property owner has died and the deceased family have the property on the market to sell but no buyer comes forward there should be a 100% discount for at least 6 months and I would suggest up to 1 year provided the family are seen to be doing all they can to sell the property at a sensible price agreed by the agents. They should be protected

Seems hard for people moving from their own home into a Care Home who can't sell their home within 6 months. Suggest 100% and 12 months for this category of people.

There should be no discount or a discount for less time i.e. 3 months. An empty property is possible a 2nd property or rents out - no need for a discount to be applied. This also ties in with 4d) overleaf.

Time between selling or renting and moving can be an issue - 6 months & 100% discount seems fair - but no longer.

But...Why not make it a 100% discount but for a shorter period of time? E.g. 100% for 3 months. This would encourage them to get newer tenants /occupants in quicker and minimise the number of empty homes in the district.

There are people crying out for houses - there is no reason property should be empty for 6 months or more.

Too complicated! If the owner is proven to be on the fiddle, then compulsory purchase property and rent it out.

Each case should be judged on its merits. When I lost my parents it took me a year to grieve, decide what to do, empty their house and dispose of it. Sometimes people are forced to move, and cannot sell their house.

The 50 % level should be for 3 months only

Probably all right at present but somewhat unfair when the property market stalls and selling takes a long time.

No discount for any period should be given.

By charging council tax immediately hopefully avoid property developers holding on to potential housing put back on market.

At a time of shortage of properties for sale or rent no discount should be given to empty properties unless they are undergone major repairs, leaving properties empty should not be encouraged.

Due to market conditions selling houses can be difficult and prolonged. Sensible negotiation should be considered.

For the above reasons (“ For landlords declaring a property under repair could be used to dodge paying council tax, therefore reduce the % and timescale.”) Additionally the value/assets are increasing.

There should be no discount.

Zero discount for an empty home. 2nd homes should be let to private or council tenants if they are empty. Again, why should the council (and taxpayer) subsidise those who may be making capital gains?

Empty properties should be discouraged. A period of 3 months should apply.

There should be no discount for empty homes. This will encourage the sale of such properties.

Charge full amount. 2 month discount fair.

Empty homes, even under repairs should be liable to 100% of council tax.

The same comment at b) is true for c) (“If they have the money to carry out the work they have the money to pay 100% of the tax these are not poor people.”). No discount should apply.

It should be 50% for 2 months , plus encouraging the owner to rent out the property on a 6 month lease to help reduce the housing crisis in Uttlesford.

No discount should be given.

Suggest 100% to discount for 3 months then full amount chargeable after that. Downside is that empty property ??? cannot easily determined no. of LTE from council tax data (need proper report). Upside is - owners are focussed on repairing property to use speedily.

All homes should pay Tax. It is a good way of holding one’s money in property, the property goes up in value, thus the tax needs to be paid.

There is more than enough demand for homes in the area - no excuse any should stand empty.

If the house is empty, no cost to council.

There is no justification for a reduced rate. The property, whether empty or not, should pay the normal rate of C.T. If the owners are not happy about this they can sell or rent the property. An empty property is a waste of resources and should not be encouraged.

No discount should be given. Houses are there to be lived in and everything should be done to encourage occupation.

In view of housing shortage, empty houses should be occupied as soon as possible.

Empty properties should be charged full rate Council Tax., There are too many empty properties and we surely need more housing - so any discount is a disincentive to bringing the properties back into use.

This depends upon reason property empty. Medical grounds Yes - owner living abroad for 6 months - No

Would it increase admin costs to have a scheme for which empty homes had to qualify? i.e. if it's just a second home, no discount, if it is empty because for example, an estate is awaiting probate, then ok to give discount.

Would it increase admin costs to have a scheme for which empty homes had to qualify? i.e. if it's just a second home, no discount, if it is empty because for example, an estate is awaiting probate, then ok to give discount.

Discount for 6 months IF on open market.

Discount for 6 months IF on open market.

No house should stand empty for more than 3 months - discount should be lost after that time encouraging Landlords to look for new tenants.

50% for 3 months - 3 months is long enough to sell a property.

We should discourage empty properties in an area where there is a housing shortage. E.g Is there a good reason for not renting out. Is the property habitable?

Individual cases need to be investigated as to why the property is empty in the first place.

The cost of empty should be as occupied weather under going repairs or not.

If property is habitable give discount for 3 months only. Owner can either move in, sell or let - 3/12 plenty of time to sort out houses need to be lived in - this will reduce problem of houses not being available for people in need. Stop subsidising landlords and developers.

Same as b. above. Need to define what is a major repair and what isn't.

Failure to charge the full amount means rate payers pick up the loss. Homes should not be left unoccupied, but returned to the Council as a source of income.

I do not believe that a discount should be offered at all. Because it does nothing to encourage the process of repair and therefore increases the likelihood of the property being neglected further.

An empty house NOT undergoing repairs should be treated as a second home.

Why is house empty if there is a Housing Shortage. Only get discount if is undergoing repair.

Empty homes could be "For sale" or just "empty" reducing time scale to 3 months would encourage quicker sales and also focus empty house owners to occupy or sell property.

If the owners are trying to sell a property after a death the discount should stay on for a longer period.

Should be longer where the homes are empty due to the delays caused by probate

As above ('If somebody has the financial means to undertake significant renovation then they can find the money to pay council tax. This money will typically just remain in the hands of small property developers.') Empty homes should not receive any discount from council tax.

Do they then pay 100% after 6 months .before the 150% after 2 years.

Why should owners be penalised for not occupying a property?

Empty homes should receive 50% discount for 3 months only.

It should depend on the reason a property is empty. A single occupant death should qualify for 100% for 12 months or until sold - for example.

Basically yes but normal voids should be zero rated. It is an administrative nonsense to extract a few days tax from the landlord .

Empty homes should be charged council tax.

Needs to be 12 months to allow for the sale of properties to go through and then repair.

After two bereavements with legal complications regarding ownership, the period of discount was inadequate and took no account of the timescale for resolution. Very stressful!

As above ('Make CT simple - every home pays it whatever the circumstances. May encourage people to speed up renovations and get house back into use.') There is a shortage of homes in Essex and rising homelessness. There should be no benefit for leaving a home empty.

Empty homes should be discouraged considering how many new ones are being built with the shortage fo housing?? 20% x 6m

They should pay full tax at least. That will teach them not to leave a house empty while this country is facing a massive housing shortage.

No discount at all. Too many empty homes.

Bereavement? Divorce? There are numerous reasons for property being empty, and if you are not providing a service, they should be charged for it! You do not refund for people going on holiday - why should you charge owners with empty property - JUSTIFY THIS!

If you can afford to have a home that is empty and not being used you should be liable to pay the Council Tax

Reduce the period to 3 months max at 50%, 3 months at 25% then 0%. Empty homes should be occupied ASAP.

Homes for sale should receive the benefit of 100% discount for 6 months when empty.

If it was 100% for 12 months it would encourage more landlords to keep rental properties in good condition - e.g. a couple of weeks between lets to carry out small repairs and decorating.

They should not receive such a high discount . Housing is scarce and so empty homes should be filled quickly. Not having a discount would encourage homes to be filled by landlords/owners

If the house has become empty as a result of the death of the council tax payer and probate is required a period of six months without payment should be granted.

25% for 3 months

Empty houses should be taxed the same as those occupiers. This would ensure houses return to an occupied state ASAP. Otherwise those leaving houses empty are rewarded

Empty property does not need council services.

50% discount for 3 months

Empty homes should not receive any discount - unless the person is in residential care or hospital . Anyone who owns a home and can afford not to live in it can afford council tax.

With the current housing crisis the council should be discouraging homes standing empty. Give a discount of 50% for a max. 3 months.

Depending on WHY the property is empty and what the circumstances are. Could the property be used for a short term meaning more revenue for both parties.

Should be less. There are plenty of people looking for housing. No one should be sitting on a property that isn't available for habitation and not have to pay for the privilege.

Because these houses there should be no empty houses in Uttlesford District Council and whether council or not so many homeless people everywhere.

TEST

Why is there any discount?

No discount should be given.

The only reason for a house to be empty when not under repairs would be for example houses left in wills and in the process of being sold, if there is no rationale for it being empty there should be council tax

Simpler to treat all 'empty houses' the same, regardless of the reasons. Saves on administration costs. I do agree that it should be time-limited to discourage long-term disuse of properties.

I am the landlord of my late parents' home in a beautiful rural area in the North of England. The house is currently vacant since the last tenant moved out, and there is not a strong demand for large rental properties in the area. I strongly object to having to pay the Council Tax when I do not make any use whatsoever of the local services.

With the amount of people in need of housing at the moment, there should be more encouragement in filling empty housing quicker. There is no reason a liveable house should be left empty for 6 months when there are so many people looking for housing. I appreciate the housing market in Uttlesford is extortionately priced but perhaps this would encourage a change. I don't see why there should be any discount applied at all.

As previously stated to many properties appear to remain empty for long periods of time. The discount should remain at 100% but the timescale reduced to 3 months, which should be ample time to make arrangements for the sale or occupation of the property.

As before, property development is a huge business in this District with large profits being made on the sale of homes. They can afford to pay 100% of the Council Tax.

The housing market can leave an empty home for a long time. This can put a heavy financial strain on someone, if they have already moved and are still trying to sell.

I think if a house is being refurbished, it should get 100% discount for 6 months. Rental properties need to be kept to a decent standard and landlords should not be discouraged from doing renovations

There should be no discount

A empty house is not costing the council expense in services so should pay less until it is occupied

I see no reason why an empty property should allow the owner to avoid paying 50% of the council tax for up to six months.

Where property is for letting, I think landlords should be given a much shorter time to find a new tenant, say 2 months. However there needs to some consideration for holiday lets where there may be longer out of season empty periods which are quite reasonable. Where property is not for letting but just left empty I don't think any discount should be given in view of the national housing shortage.

d. Empty homes premium

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house).

Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period?

If "No", please explain why.

Responses received

Empty homes are an insult to people desperate for housing. A punitive council tax might be the spur the owners need

I think it should be introduced after 1 year

Absurd premium!! A private house is exactly that. Not really anyone's business if it's empty but council tax is paid. (BTW I do not have an empty house)

Suggest additional charge of 100% to reflect the need to increase available housing

1 year is sufficient - no home should be left empty for longer without penalty.

Should be discretionary as circumstances will vary.

The unfurnished and empty period should be reduced to 1 year.

Full charge to encourage compliment and occupancy.

I think this is Daylight Robbery. If the property is empty no one else is living there and therefore not using any of the Council's services - they will already be making a contribution to the LCTS both in their primary residence and also paying a second council tax anyway.

It is essentially unreasonable and unfair

The property should be brought back into use as soon as possible. A property should not be left empty any longer than six months. The additional charge is correct.

The time period before the premium becomes due should be decreased.

Full charge should be applied

As per 4 (c). Even stronger incentives should be applied to get properties occupied.

The 2 year timescale should be reduced to 1 year.

There should be latitude given to properties held within difficult / disputed probate cases.

People need homes. There should be no empty houses. Landlords/owners should be penalised.

This is a red herring in housing policy.

It should be increased as unoccupied property adds to the local housing shortage 2 years is enough. Why not increase it to 200% and 100% per year then every year.

I agree this is the correct level of charge, but it should be charged after a property has been empty for 12 months.

Additional charge of 50% after 1 year, additional charge of 100% after 2 years.

Think it should be only ONE year, 2 years too long and not justifiable.

As with C) I would reduce timescale to no more than a year and ideally less.

Council tax to be fully decreased.

. Should be 1 year or more with an additional charge of 100% ie owners would pay 200% of the council tax per house. This would encourage owners to get things sorted out.

Just pay normal council tax at 100%.

Reduce the time scale to 12 or 18 mths.

To encourage use should pay full amount.

The level of additional charge is correct but the time period should be reduced to 1 year.

Correct time 6 months. After that 100%

Should pay more for leaving property.

There should be a higher additional charge after one year eg 100%

there should be no limit houses become disrepaired vermin move in plenty of people need homes. People keep houses and want for the property value to change to make more money.

Very good idea

100% is what is charged on occupied houses why the extra unless it is a builder/speculator wanting to let the property deteriorate so much that it has to be pulled down leaving them able to build flats or more smaller houses!

It does not give the homeowners encouragement to get the house back on the market or rent
Less than one year.

Should come in after 1 year

Should be 100% ie. Pay 200% after 2 years empty.

No penalise anyone who leaves a property empty. They will cash in on the inevitable rising price of the property.

C.Tax should relate to the person using the services not the home.

1 year. I thought council were able to acquire long standing empty homes.

Correct level - Yes; Two years - No, suggest 1 year

1 year is adequate

The period should be reduced to one year

I don't think it's fair to pay more than the normal council tax and with the increased development I can see a problem for sellers and those wanting to rent their properties in the future. I already know of people being unable to sell properties now because of the developments

150% is the minimum - could be higher . again to encourage quicker action by owner

The length of time property left empty should be reduced to six months of one year. But the cost remain at 150%. Unless property on the market for sale.

Additional charge - Yes; tow years excessive - one year reasonable I think

The additional charge should 100% (total 200%) and operate after six months.

The additional charge should come in force as soon as possible. The owners should show why they have made their decision.

Additionally, pubs that are left derelict (in hope of forcing reversion to domestic use) should be charged even more.

There should be no endtime. If a house is empty it should be used, so incentives to bring it to market must be in place.

Please see previous answers.

Increase the 'penalty' for empty houses. It is immoral to leave houses empty when there is such a need for houses.

If the property already incurs 100% council tax, a 50% hike is unjust and will not address current housing shortages for a number of reasons.

2 years period should reduce to 6 months.

They should use a sliding scale after six months grace which increases till the house is used to buy or rent instead of standing empty. Its like parking your car at a reduced rate in the car park and clogging the system.

With housing so difficult there can be almost no reason why a house stands empty (agree in some cases there might be legal reasons these are the exceptions.)

Additional charge should be applied after one year, ie reduction in timescale which would generate more revenue and encourage owners to bring property back into use more quickly.

There should be no time limit on empty homes - a house is an asset, the owners should pay maximum amount of tax.

1 year is long enough for a landlord to make a decision before 150% applies.

18 months

Unless an owner can show conclusively that there is a valid reason for it being left empty the surcharge should be increased by a further 50% every 6 months.

Period should be 18 months

200% - 1 year or more.

Should investigate reason for house being empty for such a time. Most people if able would want to cash the asset in.

But in certain circumstances there could be some level of discount ie where probate is going through courts and court has no concern of situation.

One year should be the norm.

% rate should increase every year after the first two years.

Too confusing to answer!

It should also apply to furnished properties. Unless the property is empty due to hardship e.g. severe damage, domestic violence, the timescale should be reduced to one year.

150% is fine, but should start after only 1 year.

The time should be reduced to 1 year. It can have an adverse affect on neighbouring properties for a home to remain empty for prolonged periods.

Bring the period down to one year.

To alleviate housing issues there should be a ratchet timescale i.e. 50% after 3 months. Zero after 6 months + 50% after 9 months + 100% after 12 months + 150% after 18 months +200% after 24 months.

Shorten the time period to 12 months (2 years is unnecessarily long).

The council does not provide any greater service therefore should not charge extra.

The 50% premium should be levied on homes left empty for 1 year not 2 to encourage empty homes back onto the market.

A second home is an investment. 100% is already adequate and reasonable. One should not be forced into seeling one's investments, whatever the nature of the investment. This is an objective opinion, as I do not have a second home as described above.

Increase additional charge to 100% ie 200% in all.

I think 1 year is sufficient time, but I think the amount is correct.

Depends if this level of charging is working? How many of these homes are now back in use?

If the house empty for no good reason the council charge after two years should double.

Property owners paying the full 100% are already making a contribution.

Would reduce period to 18 months rather than two years.

Should be 50% for one year, then full council tax. I do not agree with 150%.

I don't think empty house owners should be charged more than an occupied property. If it is empty, thus uninhabited then there are no demands on council services - no bins to empty etc etc. 100% should be the maximum and a better incentive (grant?) to help owners bring properties into use.

Raise to 200% after 2 years - 300% after 5 years. Empty homes are a blight and are socially reprehensible.

There's a housing shortage! A lot higher council tax if house empty for more than 6 months, there are a lot of people waiting for housing, people should be charged for leaving properties empty to encourage properties back to use, especially as Uttlesford are selfishly stopping any new homes in the area of being built.

Empty for 12 months is sufficient to resolve most issues with property including probate. I would suggest additional 50% after 12 months and increase to additional 100% after 2 years. This would provide a strong incentive to bring property back into use.

That seems rather excessive. There could be circumstances beyond their control to why is empty for so long. As they are not using any services, refuse collection or otherwise, then NO.

In my view reduce to 1 Year.

Keep it at 50% owners pay 150% of council tax per house but not 2 yrs - reduce to 1 yr or even 6 months.

See previous.

Reduce to a year to incentivise selling or renting out.

Two years is far too long for the property to stand empty - consider anti-social implications - and should be reduced to a maximum of 12 months. The additional cost should be 100% of Council Tax to facilitate swift disposal - despite services not being used they are available!

I don't see why you must wait 2 years before you do this, the UK is short of accommodation and you wish to permit no sanctions for 2 years, make it 1 year.

I suggest that the period should be reduced to one year, unless the house is undergoing major repairs.

But I think individual circumstances should come into play.

12 months is long enough to sell or let a property.

Reduce time to one year

I would like to see the 2 year period reduced as there are still too many empty properties.

But period could be reduced to 18 months

A house should not stand empty when people are homeless.

I agree with the level but I think that the timescale should be reduced to 1 year. That should be long enough to get the property sold or let.

2 year period should be reduced to 1 year max.

I think the correct level should be £150.00 after one year.

That 2 year period should be reduced to 6 months.

This amount could be raised to 200% and still have our support.

If a home is left empty for so long it should be bought by the council and used for the less fortunate (like me!!)

150% ? I do not see why the owner should pay ½ as much again. No call on bin collections, education etc. etc. I think this is unfair. 2 year time scale agreed.

I can't see how this fits in with c) (Empty homes). Assuming that I follows the period of 6 months .

What happens between 6 mths (disc) and 2 yrs (Premium)?

It feels very punitive and too high - not encouraging.

Additional charges is correct but timeframe is too long.

I believe the time period should be reduced to one year which seems fair.

Make owners pay 200%

100% full charge should apply (i.e. no refund/discount) but why more than 100%?

Increase the charge - increase what Uttlesford receives or consider compulsory purchase of the properties

Suggest reducing time period.

I do not understand the question or statement

Not sure - Depends on why the house is empty - for example this is not fair if due to someone being ill and relatives not wanting to sell house - especially relevant for elderly. Otherwise OK - should be exceptions.

Make it one year and increase the tax to 200%. There is a housing shortage. Houses kept empty for speculation is a crime.

I agree with the charge but the house should only be allowed to remain empty for a maximum of 1 year.

Some properties not suitable for use.

Reduce the timescale to 18 months to bring empty property back into use earlier.

200% after one year.

Empty houses should attract: After 1 year 150% tax After 2 years 200% tax After 3 years 500% tax

I would propose that the rate increases to 150% after 6 months, and that after 12 months there is an additional increase.

Only OK if property is passed as part of a deceased estate. Otherwise 200% level (as in 4a above) should apply.

Double or treble the additional charge - houses should not be empty when people are homeless. As per response (C), this should be 100% payable for 6 months and increase to 150% immediately thereafter.

Additional charge after one year

Should go up to 200% after two years and 150% after one year to provide an incentive to make houses available.

I consider all empty properties not undergoing any repair to make them inhabitable should pay the full 100% council tax.

Time period should be reduced to bring homes back in use sooner.

A further addition of 50% (i.e. the owners pay 200%) would be acceptable. We need to have all our empty houses occupied as soon as possible.

2 years should be reduced to 1 year`

Percentage increased/timescale reduced - see comments on previous question (If the percentage and timescale were reduced it might encourage rental or sale of the property. Thereby assisting the housing shortage.)

I believe 1 year would be adequate.

1 Year

Make them pay more to incentivise them to bring the property under occupation or sell onto someone who will.

The two year period should be reduced so that people are encouraged to bring empty houses into use sooner.

Depends on circumstances.

Charges are ok but timescale too long. 1 year would be better.

The time limit should be one year.

Reduce empty period to one year before increasing to 150%

Could be brought in after 1 year @ +50% . 2nd +75%, 3rd +100%, for same reasons as c)(to discourage property ownership solely for investment in bricks and mortar/land.)

Would suggest that this additional charge is on a sliding scale - it should increase the longer the property is empty. Would bring down period from 2 years to 1 year.

Not sure I understand this but no property should be empty. Help with letting if people are in hospital/prison/abroad?

Same as last reason none of your business.

I consider it too generous. I consider 1 year efficient and that if an owner wants to leave a house empty if unfurnished, council tax should be levied at 150% after 12 months.

It seems logical to allow any empty house to escape the additional charge. Why should the charge be removed for 2 years or any other period?

Once again this should depend on certain issues whether you are able or unable to sell your home because of certain changes to your life.

They would be encouraged more to get the homes ready for use if full tax had to be paid.

Council tax should be payable in full after 3 months non-occupancy.

Second home and empty homes provide employment (gardeners, carers, cleaners).

After 2 years empty properties should be confiscated by the council and used to house people without housing. I would apply this to 2nd homes when others have none.

I think that the level of time is brought down to 6 months. Otherwise we are paying for people with properties bought for investment. This pushes the house prices up.

Should be levied after property empty and unoccupied for one year or more.

See 4b) overleaf (An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council services are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it). Also 2 years is arbitrary, does it have any economic justification?

12 months max.

Should be 150% for 1 year after the premises become empty to encourage owners to act sooner. See c) : (1) 50% discount should be extended in cases of complicated probate and (2) Rate should be increased by increments of 50% for every 6 months over 12 months of the property remaining empty.

Unless covered by probate, 12 months is a more reasonable period.

Shorten it to a year.

If people wish to leave houses empty they should be able to. But pay tax after 12 months but maybe less 10%.

The Premium should be paid after 1 year.

That period should be until the property is back in use

I agree with additional charge but it should be brought in sooner (6 months)

I consider that the percentage should be increased and the timescale should be reduced.

Time scale should be 1 year (See previous answer: 'With the housing crisis all properties ought to be lived in.')

Empty houses should be occupied within 6 months.

Many pensioners need to go into Care Homes towards the end of their lives and Uttlesford, like many councils in the S.E., do not fund these pensioners. Uttlesford should therefore not profit from these empty homes, the only asset left to such pensioners, as they are not providing any facilities at all to these homes for which council tax is levied.

The council tax should remain the same as no one will be using council facilities.

Charge more after a shorter time e.g. +100% after 1 year. Helps increase housing stock.

I would increase it. Say 50% after 1 year and 100% after 2 years to prevent owners from sitting on empty property. If properties listed I would increase more to enforce repairs and use.

Charge 200% as large profits are made from property speculation on empty property.

6 months should be quite enough. Houses should not be left empty - please discourage.

Level of charge should be raised to 200%, and time limit reduced to one year. A further 50% should be charged for each additional year.

The premium should be introduced after 6 months especially where there might be legal problems such as waiting for probate.

Should be 200%

If property is trying to be sold during the whole time and hasn't been sold it's unfair on the owners.

Should be additional 50% after 1 year.

I feel charging 150% is a bit too much.

The additional charge should be increased there are no gains for leaving properties empty.

1 year 150% 2 years +200% as a reasonable stronger encouragement.

?

The council tax for any property should never be more than 100%. To charge above this is to use council tax for a purpose other than that for which it is intended.

The period during which a home is empty should be three months after which the council tax should be set to 200%.

I think the additional charge should be increased to maximise properties being in use.

As 4 B+C

This explanation is not clear!!

Should be more if it's just a greedy landlord or indecisive council. Many properties un-inhabited actually belong to local authorities / councils.

Reduce time limit

See (c)

Correct level of charge but it should commence after ONE year.

Agree with charge but feel two years is too long for owners - perhaps 1 year.

They shouldn't have to pay more - just pay the 100% like everyone else.

However after two years ie 200% increase would be fair.

Home owners should not be forced to occupy their property if it does not suit them.

Should be 1 year - to encourage selling or letting property.

It is the owners choice if they want their property to remain empty. They should not be made to pay more than 100%

I think the grace period should be reduced to 12 months except if there is a genuine planning application in progress, then 2 years is sufficient.

Should be additional 100% after one year - empty properties must be discouraged.

Or even double the council tax.

Reduce time to 18 months. Housing is in very short supply and every effort should be made to bring empty properties back into use.

If you own a property you should pay council tax.

No timescale, if proven owner unable to afford restoration, then compulsory purchase and rent out.

This does seem reasonable. Although again I would urge to judge each case on its merits. As why is this house empty for so long, and perhaps there are circumstances where discretion should be used.

I cannot believe that people leave houses unfurnished and empty for 2 years + without good reason. If they have good reason I hope there is some discretion for the council to waive part or all of this surcharge.

200% should be payable after one year

Limit the empty property to 12 months and then additional charge is added - hopefully encourage housing back on 'market'.

The additional charge of 50% should be introduced after 1 year, also, an additional charge of 100% (i.e. double council tax) should be introduced after 2 years or more, owners need to be encouraged to bring empty properties back into use.

But ...Deliberate attempts to allow properties to depreciate and then applying for planning permission for several swellings should be unlawful and charged appropriately.

Empty homes premium should start after 1 year vacancy.

Housing shortage is acute, therefore empty houses need to be available ASAP therefore reduce the timescale.

Reduce time period to zero.

The timescale should be reduced to 6 months and the % should be increased to 200% this to encourage these properties to be sold for the benefit of the community.

Charge full amount. You have powers for forcing people not to leave homes empty.

Empty homes should be liable for 100% of council tax.

The time should be one year and a charge of 200% after that. This would put more pressure on them to bring the property back into use in addition this should double for each extra year it is not in use. Unless a very good reason is put forward to the council in chambers to agree.

This premium should be brought in after 1 year at least.

Make it a 100% premium - so 200%

I think Council tax should be paid at the point of the house becoming empty. (nice way to make an enormous amount of capital on one's house going up in value.)

I think this should apply after 6 months - especially as the town is not designed for the amount of houses it currently has - if all vacant building were in use it would relieve the pressure to keep building.

Why should owners be taxed for doing nothing?

Double the rate to incentivise owners to fill homes and apply this both furnished and unfurnished, if legally possible

Absolute maximum of 1 year; "genuine" reasons for standing empty over 1 year must be few and far between.

Increase the premium to 100% after six months if substantial progress has not been made to bring the property up to liveable condition.

It is unbelievable that Uttlesford only charges 12.5% (2014-2016) compared to the average from the table on page 2 of 21.75%. Why is this so low? A reasonable figure surely would be 20-25%
Yes right charge. No to timescale - why two years when all other time scales are based on 12 months

Reduce period to one year. There are too many empty properties in the area.

No building should be left empty for 2 years. Perhaps assistance should be offered to Landlords in return they would allow the council to reduce their waiting list.

200% for properties empty and unfurnished for 1 year or more.

Perhaps, one year or more, unless there are circumstances that cannot be resolved e.g. in hospital. If empty that there is some evidence of maintenance and protection of habitability OR

market for sale.

With the shortage of housing why are they empty in the first place, 2 years is too long.

I believe that in a democratic society home owners should be allowed to do what they want with their own property and not be subjected to additional Tax charges with the provision that the property is NOT causing nuisance or a health problem to neighbours.

No house should be left empty for more than one year.

You should consider levying this surcharge after 18 months at 150%.

Should be one year.

Additional charge should be 100% 2 yrs is correct timescale.

Additional charge should be 100% 2 yrs is correct timescale.

This should be raised to at least 200% and the period reduced to a minimum of 12 months.

Would reduce to 1 year to encourage homes to be left empty for a shorter period.

If a house is empty for no reason they should pay council tax. Should not have had a discount in the first place.

Without knowing the reasons why a property is empty I do not believe that you can charge more than 100%

The period should be reduced to one year

To encourage occupancy of empty properties Reduce time 1 year

Should be exceptions for delays within the probate office.

Remove any discount for empty homes and keep everything at a flat rate this should help remove administration costs fo council tax and keep the system simple

How can you justify charging extra for no services being used? It is entirely feasible that the property cannot be sold adding further problems for the owner.

Too blunt. It should depend on circumstances

Should be reduced to one year only. We need homes now not in 2 years!

For most instances the answer is yes, but if an old couple die intestate (without a will) problems can go on for a long time tracing family members etc.

Should be encouraged to get someone living/using the property. Needs to be short term window to allow them to get someone in, but after that they need to be encouraged to get it in use.

As stated overleaf ('After two bereavements with legal complications regarding ownership, the period of discount was inadequate and took no account of the timescale for resolution. Very stressful!') there should be an appeals procedure that can be referenced in individual cases.

These appeals could be verified by solicitors acting for the applicant.

The timescale should be reduced to 18 months . There is a real need to bring homes back on the market and this may be an encouragement.

Reduce from two years to one year. No excuse in current situation not to ensure that all properties are used to provide homes.

House left empty this long should be compulsorily purchased, failing that tax should be much higher.

No. I don't own a second property - but if I did I believe it is my right to do what I want with it - it's nothing to do with the council!

It should be 12 months and not 2 years. Leaving a property unoccupied for over 12 months is not acceptable or justifiable.

Reduce the period to one year at 150% then increase to 200% - shortage of homes means empty properties should be back in use ASAP

But each case must be considered on its merits and reasons.

I agree with the level of charge but consider that one year is quite long enough to keep a property completely empty without incurring (an additional) charge.

Even assuming the 50% surcharge is lawful this may not be the best way to achieve the objective, given potential redevelopment value and risk to listed or character buildings.

Compulsory purchase should be considered.

100% is fair enough. 150% is unduly targeting landlords but owners/landlords need to prove that work is being carried out.

Make it 200%, not 150% i.e. double the council tax . apply it to furnished homes as well.

18 months at 200%

Do not make any additional charge in line with government guidance when a property is genuinely on the market for sale.

The period should be reduced to one year to encourage owners of multiple properties to either occupy, sell or rent them. In the current property shortage this is appropriate.

My thoughts at that the additional charge is correct at +50% but that the time period could be reduced to 1 year as an incentive to return a property to use in these times where housing is desperately needed! Perhaps this should be done in 2 stages - first reducing to 18 months, then to 1 year.

Reduce time period to 1 year

I think there should be exceptions in cases where owners are unable to sell the home - e.g. planning blight.

With current lack of housing, there should be no incentive to leave a property empty for more than 12 months. However, there should be provisions to allow homes being empty before and after major repairs without penalising home owners.

With the current housing crisis owners should be encouraged to bring empty properties back into use by an additional charge of 100% after 6 months.

My answer is an empty homes premium is whatever My answer is less than 2 years is people should not a second home just not keep for just live in, always not standing empty

TEST

The percentage is fine, but reduce the timescale to 12 months.

In some cases there may be good reason that the property remains empty e.g there may be no buyers for that property or the housing market is stagnant. Also, an empty property is not generating demand for council services and there is no real justification for any charge let alone a surcharge.

I believe that the timescale should be reduced to ONE year for empty homes.

Should be after 1 year.

The question does not provide sufficient information to give a response. If the Council is empowered to fine owners of empty properties, then there should be a process that takes into account the reasons for the delay in bringing the property back into use. The mass of restrictions, often arbitrarily applied in Uttlesford (as compared with other councils) can make it a slow and difficult process

Don't stop there - keep raising the cost as time goes on. 150% isn't a big enough stick - add another 50% each year (and in the event of non-payment, eventually enough will be owed that the property can be claimed in lieu so that the council can then bring the property back into use itself).

150% should be applied after 1 year not 2 years.

I think you could argue that the period could be reduced from 2 years to 1. The owner receives a discount for the first 6 months (as per previous question), pays the full rate for the following 6 months and I think should be penalised thereafter for failing to keep the property occupied.

The time period should be reduced to 1 year and an additional surcharge should be made equal to any increase in property value made in the same period.

That will not help owners to renovate, as they will not be able to afford it.

I believe the additional charge should apply after 12 months and increased by 50% for each subsequent year. It is totally unacceptable to have homes empty for longer than a year when there is a problem of housing need. Residential property should not be treated as an asset like art or fine wine to appreciate in value for future sale, but as something that should be lived in.

Don't understand the implications

The additional charge should begin six months after the property had stood empty, whether furnished or unfurnished.

I agree there should be an additional charge but I think a shorter period of say a few months should be the case before the premium is charged. This will discourage owners from keeping property empty and unfurnished.

Q5 Further comments made regarding the LCTS scheme

Responses received

If you have any further comments to make regarding the LC...

Apart from the desperate need for housing empty properties have a deteriorious effect on neighbourhoods

I think the amount of support available should be increased where individual circumstances may merit this additional assistance

You should review who is exempt from Council Tax . Whilst I agree with most there are certain individuals that should no longer be exempt e.g. Religious communities, USAF personnel and dependants and diplomats. They all earn a good wage.

It is very important to protect the frail or elderly who are poor and still living in their own home from council tax which in some cases is their biggest bill. To have to choose food or heat or council tax is undignified in a civilised rich western country.

A useful study!

. It should help ALL those on low incomes of less than £16,500K. Low income families who are working but own their own houses still need help!

Uttlesford is a wealthy area and we should be prepared to support those less fortunate and ensure that usable housing is not left empty in a period of shortage.

Uttlesford virtually full employment, affluent area. UDC should phase out discount support to all others than those with total or proven financial needs.

Any incentive is good to provide much needed homes.

On an urgent matter pensioners would appreciate details of honest work people & gardeners. I find it very difficult. Roof and hedge top of list (it was cut one month ago a now needs doing again!) Thank you.

Hit the rich not the poor or disabled Make a stand. Advise people who are a the pour disabled being hit - Disgrace conservative policy!!

Cuting grass round rout more not just twice a year not safety walk with children and fixed more

pothalls.

What about Pensioners in three bedroom houses and only using downstairs when there are family waiting for them

Low income but working is an important consideration - i wouldn't want this reduced

Seems quite complicated - but fair

As an elderly, low income, lady I find the scheme a godsend that enables be to live the rest of my life in a happy and safe 'sheltered' flat with the occasion treat - thank you.

My answers are in accord with improving work ethic and ensuring people one better off working when possible. Benefits should not otherwise be provided.

I think that the costs should be lowered for people over the age of 75. My wife and I are over 80 and and we need to have all the help/assistance we can get.

As a disabled pensioner I am relieved that I will receive some protection. I did work, very hard, for 40 years as a farm labourer but need some mercy in my current situation and in need of help at this time in my life, which the government should understand.

Re. 4d. Two years is a long time and, unless there are absolutely genuine reasons for the house to remain empty for two year, owners should be encouraged even further than at present, to bring it back into use.

We can only hope this new scheme is not as error-ridden or discourteously implemented as the previous 'benefit' one. The structure was extremely wasteful and punitive. Also, the credit card surcharge for payment is throughly outrageous.

i like the aim to not allow properties to remain empty as we need to use our exisiting housing stock rather than build more houses - so why then do you not do something about all the properties with agricultural ties that are empty. If the tie was removed from all these a lot more houses would be available.

Within the (ridiculous) parameters and budgets set by central government I think the council should protect the vulnerable, especially if they rely on welfare benefits, whilst encouraging best use of clement housing stock.

Arrears of tax is unacceptable. Either apply for curt orders tro loby to change law for council to directly seize monies owed from sale of property. Talks less and do more.

Why was this pretty much only about property.

GET EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO THE MARKET.

In this area the scheme needs to focus on the target groups mentioned who must be protected. There are too many house owners etc in this affluent area who are exploiting the system.

n/c

Make some allowance for people trying to sell.

Landlords who make money buying and selling houses should pay maximum taxes and society should look after the vulnerable.

Those with enough money/extra properties should be subsidising those on low/no income who CANNOT (not choose not to) work.

You should protect and help the vulnerable people in real crisis.

Thank you!

Keep the activity of the council to a minimum so that extra bureaucracy is avoided.

Pay more attention to the section of society who needs help.

Does the drop in LC support mean that we have more people out of work? Need to survey those who have dropped out of school. Why is this?

Bring back national council tax benefit!

The quick and easy way to reduce housing shortages is to make use of the 300 000 + houses already built in the UK that are empty or not fully repaired. Kick start the process with incentives to get going and repair!

Empty business properties should also be taxed in this way. It is shocking to see so many old local pubs being intentionally vacant and left to rot, so that developers can knock them down and make vast profits. For example The Colts in Stansted.

A sliding scale for LCTS would be fairer. As a retired, married couple we pay full tax on our home, despite living on a modest income. Our house is a large one, because we have worked hard to make it so, yet our consumption of council services is very low. A balance should be struck.

There are too many empty homes/second homes this should be discouraged we are an over crowded island and need to stop building new homes when existing are empty or under used.

UDC have got it about right, well done.

The days of 'feather bedding' benefit claimants at the expense of property owners has surely to

cease with a so called conservative government.

It is clear that there is a need for this scheme and I suspect we have more people in the protected groups than most people assume. It is difficult to answer the questionnaire without more info about the alternatives or what else the money could be spent on.

What are you doing to actually get people to pay this (ie overdue amounts)

Consideration should be given to 100% discount for empty homes that are 'for sale' or in the process of being sold. Some circumstances should be assessed on a case by case basis.

Shame people should have to pay for Garden Waste. Don't think about Pensioners or disabled people. Also I don't think Pensioners should have to pay Council Tax

I am not familiar with LCTS. Last question below not sure how to answer. Do you have to be already designated by a professional to say you are in a protected group? I have put our status beside previous question. (2 pensioners / Poor health. I am carer for my husband)

It's difficult to believe that this is anonymous when you ask for a post code! Perhaps it would be just as useful if you asked for just the first part.

With more houses being built the LCTS should go down not increase, because you will be collecting more money from more people, so pooling of the rates. So in actual fact the rates should go down.

Would the council consider taking over empty houses to help their housing lists. (just a thought)

Recipients should

Vital that this is targeted to those who really need it - stringent eligibility rules must apply.

There should be a strong message that empty homes do not help anyone. En masse, they destroy communities, often fall into disrepair and could be used by those less fortunate who are desperate for housing.

Plus a rebate 25 % 2 years once in use.

No further comment.

Almost every article in 'Uttlesford Life' refers to an email address for further information!! What about we who have no computer??

Thanks for asking but I'm not sure many, including me, are well enough informed to make other than 'in principle' judgements.

I rent over 60 years old the rent keeps going up £25 every year their needs to more help for us because were does it end they the landlords are priceing us out I can't get a council house because they go to people with kids who haven't done a days work in their lives had child to get a council house and benefits.

People with more than one property (how many rooms do you need?) can better afford to pay, there should be no discounts!

Like all activities you should try to spend as little of other peoples money as possible.

We are happy to help people that can't help themselves but not people that won't help themselves. If you can afford a second home, you can afford council tax.

As a pensioner living alone on a low income the 25% discount for lone occupancy is not enough.....

If we are here and benefit from its balmy climate we should pay for it. They could always try Margate or Hastings.

Your authority needs to get unpaid tax paid - you need to charge tax when monthly payments are not made. Stop 6 and 12 month payments. Attention to LET properties, these should pay in advance as tenants leave without paying.

All empty home owners should be encouraged to rent them or sell them. Inthsi housing shortage staying empty only makes them deteriorate faster.

If an elderly person has to go into a carehome this should after the house being empty for up to a year - so it sells.

I think Uttlesford Council do a wonderful job. Thank you.

Would suggest looking at longerterm (5 to 10 years) and see where LCTS level needs to be. And base rates criteria on a level incline to that point. Easier for recipients to acclimatise to.

If a house lies empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years then the owner can afford to pay a maximum amount. Unless they are ill, work abroad or a legitimate reason then the house for them is just an investment.

Staff needed to make checks and not let owners keep get away with excuses for not paying what is due.

I think pensioners should not have to pay council tax if they only have a state pension.

It is very wrong to take extra tax from hard working people to subsidise people on benefits.

Looks like the council are making the right decisions.

Without the LCTS I would be in dire straits. It is a very worthwhile scheme. Regarding empty home - I really think the government's scheme of building no homes is wrong and with a million empty homes in the UK anything that helps to fill these is surely the best use of resources.

People purchase a second home or buy to rent to make money - IF THERE SO GREEDY they'd rather keep property empty till they rent out at above market rate - of course rates etc. increase People from abroad, who own property for investment / holiday homes, in UK should be charged more to subsidise LCTS.

Each time I complain some smartarse at UDC explains why I'm wrong! Sack the b*****d!

A more generous LCTS scheme would reduce arrears which incur transactional costs for the Council (chasing, court procedures), so may even save money.

I'm using this to bring forward about lack of potholes fixed in Saffron Walden. also the amount of houses being built is a joke. There's a lot more traffic . Thus people are becoming more aggressive with their driving. All accidents and deaths are on your hands!!

I am in the happy position of being able to afford my Council Tax. I wish to see those less fortunate than myself helped as much as possible please.

Charge or sue.

My husband and I are both approaching our 80s always worked hard never claimed anything, We just are out of the threshold of claiming help. It is a financial struggle to hold onto our home, but we love our home. So why should we expect people with second homes benefiting. Surely they should be the first to be able to afford council tax as others do. If you can't pay your way DO NOT EXPECT OTHERS TO ONLY if you are disabled.

What is happening to the buildings next to the hospital opposite Tesco which are abandoned and look ugly?

The LCTS should be kept to a minimum to avoid excessive expenditure by the council and increasing demands on council tax payers.

This questionnaire covers quite complex issue. It might have been helpful to know how many people receive this benefit. The principal of protection of those in need, living in an affluent area is correct.

Maintain strict control of LCT

We are told we need more housing, lets get what we have back on the market. I fail to understand why single occupancy receives a discount, they use the same services and should pay going rate.

I'm not sure how listed buildings are covered, (it at all), by this scheme but there must be some action/monetary sanction to protect such buildings from deliberate neglect by unscrupulous developers.

There are always exceptions or unforeseen circumstances and consequences. Therefore, whilst the cited criteria all appear reasonable and justifiable, there ought to be a review system available for claimed special cases. Perhaps it already exists.

Hard working people must be protected.

“Work ethic” is a doubtful concept. Karl Weber, who coined the term, did not do so appraisingly. He also described the capitalist “iron cage”. Work is a complex notion. André Gorz criticizes the ideology of work as supportive of inequality. Much of the best rewarded “work” is socially useless or even destructive.

Nice to be asked for an opinion.

In cases of real hardship and poverty help should be reviewed.

It would have helped with some of the questions if you'd told us what constitutes a 'low income'. Single occupancy houses should have more reduced rate. Not fair to punish people for living alone.

There should be more support for elderly applicants, who are often very anxious and confused about their entitlements.

Although I myself pay CT anyone who refused to do so has my full support. I give UDC what I must by law - beyond that, money or anything else, nothing whatsoever.

How about using some of these empty houses to house some of the refugees.

Who worded this document? The questions aren't good enough to elicit a response that can be properly assessed.

Cases of a single parent who goes out to work, but has to pay after school and holiday child care should be carefully considered. Some people are struggling with this.

If a house stands empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years then the owners should pay more

that 150% council tax.

I would not wish to see anyone who has to been residing in the UK for at least 5 years benefitting from this scheme.

2nd home discount should still apply to annex attached to a home...dependent on how this is viewed by the council.

Get homes (empty) back on the market a.s.a.p.

There are clear steps the council can take here to help the housing crisis while reducing cost of LCTS. So do it!

My husband, 81 years of age born at Ingleside Place in 1934 April 1st . 21 in 1939 his Dad was allocated a new council house at 10 Catons Lane Saffron Walden , Essex. No LCTS in 1939

TEST

As long as the people in need get the help I agree but safeguards must be in place to prevent any fraud

I benefited from the council tax reduction when my home was empty and undergoing major repairs so I know how welcome this reduction was when faced with the costs of refurbishment/repairs. The temporary reduction acts as an incentive to bring a home up to modern standards and is to be welcomed generally as a way of improving the housing stock of the nation/council.

The need for a support system suggests that the Council Tax scheme itself is flawed but this is a matter for Parliament and beyond the control of the council.

I am happy with the current scheme as long as LCTS is provided for those genuinely on low incomes. I would however like to see a reduction in the timescale for the empty homes premium to one year, this would benefit UDC in an increased income and be an incentive to owners of empty properties to put them back on the housing market.

Lower rates for single person living.

This survey limits the amount of text one can enter. Modern IT systems should be able to cope with more text than most of the public can be bothered to type in with negligible cost - being unable to complete a paragraph because a programmer decided that 400 characters was enough is unacceptable (and annoying). Either you want people's opinions, or you don't. Seems that you don't...

Please check this document for advise:

http://npi.org.uk/files/9214/3386/4426/CTS_challenges_and_options_FINAL.pdf

I am not in favour of promoting the 'work ethic' in cases where people are genuinely unable to work. Current policies seem uncomfortably close to Social Darwinism.

I believe this is a positive step forward, the people on lowest incomes should not be hit harder with these changes. People who leave houses empty and are in no rush to fill them because they know they have 6months - a year before they have to start paying should not be allowed to get away with this to the detriment of residents who pay their council tax every month/cannot afford to pay any/more.

Property that remains empty for long period of time soon become uninhabitable and therefore steps should be taken ensure the council is aware of the owned reasons for the property being empty and their intentions for the property. If the council is not satisfied with their explanation, steps should be taken for the compulsory purchase of the property.

The Conservatives at UDC need to get a grip of Town & Parish Councils abusing their grants while also increasing their share of Council Tax. The most cost effective resolution for residents in Saffron Walden is for the Town Council to become a unitary authority with UDC. Why are we paying out for two Council buildings, two sets of staff and so on when the public doesn't understand the difference?

It can be punitive against those with very low incomes. The Council Tax dept is atrocious and quite inept and unhelpful.

Questionnaire should have had a don't know option.

I hope you mean to reduce spending on this as much as possible

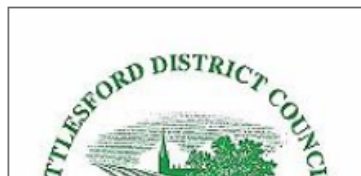
I don't think benefits claimants should be charged anything, particularly those with children

4.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire forms for the paper and online consultation followed an identical format.

Have your say on council tax support scheme

Every resident in Uttlesford has the chance to have their say on how much financial assistance should be given to working age recipients of local council tax support.



As a result of changes to the welfare system, councils now run a scheme called Local Council Tax Support (LCTS), which has replaced the old Council Tax Benefit. It is a government system designed to ensure people are better off working than not.

The scheme is administered by councils, which have some discretion over how LCTS is set, and are also required each year to ask residents how much support they think



Uttlesford Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

Do you agree with this?

Yes

No (Please specify below)

Powered by **snap**

for Uttlesford's scheme in 2016/17 are for working age recipients to pay their bill - the same as this year.

ell, Cabinet Member for Finance & Administration, said: "Uttlesford has consistently maintained the most generous Local Council Tax e in Essex and this is something we can be proud of. That we are able in which the council has been run.

inity, and so we must balance our financial ability to support those on s such we are committed to ensuring all residents get the opportunity to

short questionnaire which is included in the latest edition of *Uttlesford* or by calling the council's Customer Service Centre on 01799 510510.

d) Empty Homes Premium

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house).

* As a guide, if the percentage is reduced and/or the timescale increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage is increased and/or the timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period?

Yes No

If no, please explain below

5. If you have any further comments to make regarding the LCTS scheme please use the space below

About you

Please enter your postcode here

Are you in receipt of LCTS? Yes No

If yes, are you in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)? Yes No

Next steps

This consultation will close on 30 September 2015.

This scheme needs to be agreed by Uttlesford District Council's Full Council, in this case by 31 January 2016. If approved, the scheme will take effect from 1 April 2016.

Following the decision, the results from the consultation will be available on the Council's website.

Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Introduction

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) has replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and each year the council must consult on the proposed scheme for the following year.

The results of this consultation will be presented to councillors in the autumn with the final scheme for 2016/17 being agreed in December, to start on 1 April 2016.

The government's aim for the scheme is to promote the work ethic and ensure that people are better off working than not. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920.

The council wants to hear your view on this scheme so please take a few minutes to complete the form and send it back to us in the envelope provided. If your envelope is missing, please contact the council by phone 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/LCTS

This consultation is anonymous but collated results will be publicly available, including written answers. These will not be attributed to any individual but please do not include any personal or confidential information in your responses.

1. The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

Do you agree with this? Yes No

If no, why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected, in this box

Please turn over

2. The table below shows how Uttlesford's rate compares with other Essex councils.

	% how much claimant pays 2013/14	% how much claimant pays 2014/15	% how much claimant pays 2015/16
Basildon	15	25	25
Braintree	20	20	20
Brentwood	20	20	20
Castle Point	30	30	30
Chelmsford	20	23	23
Colchester	20	20	20
Epping Forest	20	20	20
Harlow	24	24	24
Maldon	20	20	20
Rochford	20	20	20
Southend-on-Sea	25	25	25
Tendring	15	15	20
Thurrock	25	25	25
Uttlesford	8.5	12.5	12.5

For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000.

Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year? Yes No

If you have answered no, what figure should be used and why?

3. The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district.

Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost? Yes No

If you have answered no, why not?

4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.

a) Second homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house.

Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

b) Empty homes undergoing major repair

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months.

* As a guide, if the percentage or timescale is increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage or timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

c) Empty homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months.

* As a guide, if the percentage or timescale is increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage or timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

4.3 Profiling

Geographical distribution

CM6 2BA	CM24 8JD	CM6	CB10 2XD	CB11 3PQ	CB11 3QD	CM6 3NJ	CM6 2QS
CM22 6DD	CM6	CM6 2PF	CM6 3QQ	CM6 2PH	CM6 3QS	CM6 1UG	CM6 2DD
CB10 3LE	CB11 3LE	CB11 4DX	CM22 7TG	CB10 2XH	CM6 3BA	CM6 1YI	CB10 2SB
	CB11 3UJ	CM22 6JS	CM6 3LU	CB11 3EE	CM6 1BY	CB11 3AA	CB11 4BH
CM6 1PT	CM24 8HU	CM24 8HX	CM24 8HP	CM24 8HJ	CB10 2AX	CB11 3ES	CB11 4PE
CB11 3UH	CM6 3NE	CM22 6HY	CM24 8BD	CM6 3EP	CM6 2AA	CM6 2AQ	CM22 6QH
CM6 1LU	CM6 1BS	CM6	CB11 3YG	CB11 3UG	CB10 2BS	CM22 6HH	
CB10 2HA	CB10 2SW	CB11 3DN	CB10 2BB	CB10 2BA	CM23 1DR	CM22 6AB	CM6 3FH
CM6 1SE	CB11 3AR	CM22 7EU	CB11 3DZ	CM24 8EJ	CM6 2LL	CB11 4JU	CM22 6LB
CB10 1BY	CB11 4QS	CM24 8BD	CB11 3FA	CB11 4HD	CM6 3HQ	CM24 8GJ	CM24 8HW
CM24 8HJ	CM6 3DY	CB11	CM6 3RT	CM6 3HY	CM6 3NP	CM6 3NE	CM6 1BU
CM6 1BS	CM22 6AT	CM23 1BD	CM6 3NA	CM24 8FQ	CB10 2XW	CM22 6AU	CM24 8ES
CM22 6TD	CM6 1NF	CM6	CM6 2LJ	CM6 1UD	CM6 1SR	CB11 4QN	CM22 6AE
CM6 1TY	CB10 1BD	CM1 4Q	CB11 4QT	CB11 4HA	CM6 2HY	CM22 6RW	CB11 4DE
CB10 2ED	CM6 2AE	CM24 8FP	CM24 8DL		CM24 8RL	CM24 8HJ	CB11 3GZ
	CM6 2QD	CM6 2FL	CM24	CM24 8NB	CB10 1TS	CB10 2DF	CM22 6TG
CM6 2H	CB11 4TH	CM6 2LN	CM6 1JP	CM6 3HY	CM23 1DR	CM23 1HP	CB10 2XD
CB11 4HA	CB11 3DA	CB10 1DG	CM6 1UG	CM6 1BP	CM6 2AQ	CM6 1XW	CB11 4SB
CB10 1QD	CB11 4LQ	CM6 3HD	CB11 3TJ	CB10	CM6 3SX	CM6 1LZ	CB11 3XJ
CB10	CB10 2AJ	CM6 3RA	CM6 3DP	CM6 3DL	CM6 2AY	CB11 4DX	CB10 1PH
CM22 6LL	CB11 3DJ	CM22 6HZ	CM24 8DL	CM24 8JT	CM6 3QT	CM22 6RX	CM22 6PP
CM22 6LH	CM24 8NF	CM22 6HA	CM6 3DY	CM6 3AY	CM24 8LD	CM6 3QF	CM6 3JD

CM6 3HB	CM6 2PZ	CB10 2SR	CB11 3SG	CB10 2SE	CM22 6QT	CM6 2ND	CM6 3HY
CM6 1DA	CM22 6TG	CM6 1EE	CM6 3PP	CM6 1ED	CM6 3QU	CB10 2TZ	CM22 6HG
CB11 4UU	CB10 2XR	CB11 3LP	CB11 3HF	CB11 4BA	CM22 6AX	CB10 2DS	CM22 6ED
CB11 2ES	CB11	CB11 3AD	CB11 3DE	CM6 1JP	CM6 2AB	CM22 7EH	CB10 2HG
CB11 4NP	CM6 3HX	CB11 3BT	CB11 4BL	CB11 3AG	CM6 3DU	CB10 1AJ	CB11 3HU
CM22 6LR	CM24 8HQ	CB10 2AH	CB10 2DW		CM22 7ET	CM23 1DD	CM6 3GN
CM6 3SA	CB10 2PE	CB10 2PD	CB10 2TZ	CB10 2DP	CM6 1PL	CM6 3TE	CB10
CB10	CB11 3PZ	CM6 1HQ	CM6 1TF	CM22 6DQ	CB11	CM22 6PJ	
CB10 1NY	CM6 1TQ	CM6 3QU	CMY 4TN	CB10 2XA	CB10 1BD	CM24 8SP	CM22 7DH
CM24 8AR	CM22 7AA	CM6 2ND	CM22	CM6 1PW	CM6 1ER	CM6 2NB	CM6 2LT
CM6 2LL	CM6 3EG	CM6 1WP	CB11 3EH	CB10 1LZ	CM6 3GF	CM6 1YQ	CM6 3NG
CM6 1PJ	CM6 3BU			CB10 2AE	CB10	CB10 1JF	CB21 4NN
CM24 8HX	CB10 2LQ	CB10 2TQ	CM24 JKL	CM24 8DN	CM24 8JS	CM22 6LD	CB11 3SG
CM6 1DS	CM3 1HU	CM6 1AF	CM22 2TG	CM22 6AQ		CM6 1FJ	CM6
CB10 1AH	CM24 8JX	SG8 8NP	CM22 7DB	CM6 1EE	CB11 4DE	CB10 2BS	CM6 1EA
CB10 2NA	CB11 3WH	CM6 2LT	CB10 1NP	CB11 3DB	CB10 2HR	CB10 2GF	CB10 2AB
CM6 3QR	CB10 2DA	CB10 2AA	CB10 2AZ	CM6 3LX		CM22 6SP	CB10 2YY
CB10 2QW	CB11 3TZ	CB11 3XF	CM6 3HT	CM6 3DG + 3DX	CM6 3EG	CM6 4FR	CB10 2AS
CB10 2AX	CB11	CM6 1AS	CM6 1SL	CM6 1RL	CM24 8PB	CB10 2PL	CB10 2DF
CB11 3HG	CM6 1UG	CB11	CM6 2H2	Ashdon	CB11 4GJ	CB10 2AH	CB11 3PE
CB11 4BL	CB11 4TS	CM6 3QD	CM24 8AT	CB11 3PP		CM6 1QZ	CB11 4HJ
CB11 3UG	CB11 4EX	CM6 1NS	CM6 1QB		CM6 1PX	CB11 4AW	CM6
CM6 1FA	CM6 1JP	CB10 2QG	CM22 6QP	CB11 3DE	CB11 3DB	CB10 2LF	CB10 1BY
CM6 1LT	CM22 6DD	CB11 3XJ	CM24 8NB	CM6 1XE	CM22	CM6 1PN	CM22 6PP
CM22 6DH	CM22 6QZ	CM24 8		CB11 3ES	CB10 2BP	CB11 3S4	CB11 3WH

CM6 3HP	CM22 6RA	CM6 3AX	CM6 3EU	CB10 2RQ	CB10 2UT	CM6 1GA	CM24 8TF
CM22 6NN		CB11 3EQ	CM24 8NN	CM6 1HB	CB10 1EJ	CM24 8HP	CB10 2XP
CM6 2QR	CB11 3GP	SG8 8QT	CM22 6NL	CB11 4AS	CB10 1PJ	CM6 1HG	CM6 1BL
CB11 3AE	CB11 4XJ	CM22 6TD		CB21 4PE	CB10 1AU	CB11 3WH	CB11 3LN
	CM6 2QW	CM22 7EN	CM22 7EN	CB10 2BA	CM24 8NF	CM22 6HL	CM24 8LZ
CM6 2BS	CM24 8RL	CB11 4BD	CM23 1DS	CB11 3SQ	CB11 4TG	CM22 7EG	CM23 5QD
CB11 3PU	CB10 1XN	CM23 1AX	CB11 4DJ	CB11 3BU	CB11 4BG	CB11 4GJ	CM6 3EL
CB10 2RY	CM23 1BT	B10 IJF	CB10 1NU	CM22 7QP	CM6 2EJ		CM22 6RT
CB11 4LT	CB10 1AH	CM22 7RH	CM24 8LE	CB11 4DW	CM23 5QL	cb11 3af	cb11 4dh
CB10 1AT	CB11 4JJ	CB10 2AP	CM6 3FD	CM6 1PL	CM3 1QQ	CM6 3JR	CB10 2AZ
CB11 4UU	CB10 2ED	CB11 4DG		CB11 4DJ	CB11 3QT	CM22	CB10 2HL
CM24 8UJ	CM6 3EP	CB11 3FZ	CM24 8NS	CM24 8JD	CM6 3GL	CB10 2AS	CB11
CB11 3DG	CM22 7EZ	CB10 2D	CM7 4TP	CB11 4TH	CB11 3BL	CB10 1NB	CM6 1PH
CM24 8EH	CM23 5QG	CM23 5QD	CM6 1YQ	CM6 3DT	CM6 1PH	CM6 2DR	CM22 7HY
CM24 8JT	CM6 3PU	CB10 1EH	CB10 2GF	CB10 2ED	CM23 1DS	CB10 2TJ	CM22
CB11 3TH	CM6 3GW	CB10 2DQ	CM24 8GY		CB10 1RD	CB10 1XH	CM6 1RG
CM6 3SX	CM6 3RG	CM6 1DT	CM22 6TD	CB11 3RU	CB11 4DX	CM6 2PE	CB10 1AT
CM22 7EZ	CB10 2HG		CB10 2BP	CB10 2AZ	CB10 1PU	CM6 1XW	CB11 4AR
CB11	CB11 4EA	CB11 3XD	CM22 7AD	CM24 8JS	CB10 1UX	CB10 1BN	CB10 1NA
CB10 1DZ	CB11 4PQ	CM22 6BN	CB10 1NA	CM24 8DW	CM6 1HW	CB11 3BJ	CB11 4XB
CM6 3SF	CM7 4TS	CB10 2TG	CB11 4KS	CM6 2JX	CM22 7PH	CM24 8DT	CM24 8UF
CM24 8AX	CB10 2PP	CM6 2RF	CB10 1XB	CB11	CB11 3DB	CB10 1PL	CB11 3RD
CB11 4JG	CB10 2HZ	CM6 1BU	CM6 2LJ	CM7 4TN	CM7 4PU	CM6 2PG	CB21 4PE
CB10 2LY	CM24 1RL	CM6 3NY	CM6 3NE	CM22 7JD	CM6 3SW	CB11 4PP	CM6 2JY
CM6 1FW	CM22 7AP	CB11 3AH	CB11 4UU	CM24 8JD	CB10 2HR	Broad Oak	CB11
CM22 6HW	CB11 4QS	CM22 7PH	CM22 7TZ	CM6 2PF	CB10 1AG	CB10 1EH	CB11 4QU

CB10 1TS	CB11 3QB	CM6 1PB	CM3 1JY	CM6 1AZ	CM24 8FY	CB11 4PQ	CB11 4 JY
CB11 4AW	CB10 1QD	CB10 1PL	SE8 8QR	CB10 2HN	CM22 7TA	CM6 3ND	CB11 4DE
CM23 1AX	CM23 1AA	CB10 2AX	CM24 8FW	CB11 3EF	CM6 1WG	CB10 2RQ	CB10 1DG
CM6 2DD	CB10 2LZ	CM6 1EE	CM22 7HY	CB11 3FA	CM6 1BG	CM6 1PX	CB11 3PJ
CB10 2AT	CB11 4RT	CB10 2BE	CM6 3SY	CB11 4GN	CB10	CB10 1QF	CB10 2HS
CM22 6QR	CM24 8DU	CB10 2HL	CB11 3A	CM22 7JB	CM22 7QS	CM6 3RA	CM6 1AS
SG 8 8QJ	CM22 6LA	CB11 4PE	CM22	CB11 3BL	CB10 2AB	CM22 6SH	CM24 8TJ
CB10 1LZ	CB10 1EU	CM22 7ER	CB10 1PL			CM6 1BW	CM22 7HX
CM22 7HY	CM22 6RA	CB11 4DF	CM24 8EZ	CM22 6DJ	CM6 3ND	CM6 3LU	CM24 8AU
CM24 8FP	CM23 5QA	CM6 1TL	SG8 8QJ	CM6 2DU	CM6 1SA	CM24 8UX	CM24 8AD
CB11 3UG	CB11 3SF	CM2	CB11 3PJ	CB11 3EF	CM22 7EZ	CM23 5QA	CM22 7SW
CB11	CB10	CB10 2XA	CB10 2BA	CB10 2DP	CB11 3FA	CB10 1AW	CB10 1AW
CB10 2BY	CB11	CM6 2HR	CM6 1QT	CM6	CM24 8H	CM6 3TE	CM
CM22 7RH	CM6 2SE	CM6 2AY	CM22 7JD	CM22	CM22 6	CM22	CM6 3
CM6 3NN	CB11	CM1 4QX	CB10	CM6 3ST	CM6 ZAY	CM6 2AG	CM6 3LF
CM6 3SA	CM6 1BX	CM22 6EZ	CM24 8DS	CM1 4QZ	CB11	CB10 2LW	
CB11 4TH	CM22	SG8 8QN	CB10 2LF	CM22 6RP	CM6 2DT	CM6 2QS	CB10 1JS
CM23 1DG	CB10 1NW	CB10 1BN	CB10 2BN	CM6 1WU	CM24 8FQ	CB10 1NY	CB10 1BJ
CB10 1BJ	CB11 4JB	CB10 1FP	CM22 7AZ	CM22 7RF	CB10 1JQ	CM6 3PP	CM23 1BT
CB11 3DU	CM24 8AR	CM24 8LN	CM22 7LT	CM22 7RE	CM24 8HH	CM6 2JT	CM22 7PH
CB10 1PX	CB10 2DF	CM3 1JY	CM24 8JX	CM1 4QW	CB11 4QY	CM6 3QL	CM22 7RL
CM6 1FW	CB10 1AQ	CB10 1LZ	CM6 3EG	CM6 1RE	CM22 7AJ	CM24 8NH	CB11 3XJ
CM6 3	CM6 2EY	CM24 8RL	CM6 2LS	CM6 1QD	CM6	CB10 2RJ	CB10 1JG
CB11	CM6 3SQ	CM24 8HX	CB11 3SJ	CB11 4AF	CB10 1AQ	CM3 1QF	CM22 7RF
CB10 1NA	CM6 2BE		CB10 1QA	CM6 1DY	CM22 6LA	CB10 2AQ	CB11 4GA
CB11 3TR	CM22 7BT	CB10 2XG	CM24 8FE	CM23 5QH	CM6	CM6 3PX	CM6 2NE

CB10	CB10 2AP	CB10 1JS	CM6 1BS	CM6 3BE	CB10 1PW	CM22 7QU	CM22 7BH
CM6 3SN	CB11 4BE	CB11 4BT	CM6 2QF	CM6 1LX	CB11 4QS	CB11 4AR	CM22 6RT
CM22 7QY	CB11 3EA	CM23 1DR	CM6 2QR	CM24 8DA	CB10 1NN	CB10 2LG	CB11 3EQ
CM6 1SL	CB11 3RS	CM22 6TB	CM22	CB11 4TQ	CM22 6AY	CM22 6RG	CB10 2BN
CB10 2DP	CM6	CM22 6TG	CB11 3PJ	CB10 2BA	CM22 7ER	CM6 3SE	CM23 1DY
CM6 1PX	CB11 3JN	CB11 4DQ	CB11 4PU	CB11 36A	CB11 4QR	CB11 4XB	CB11 4JB
CB11 3PU	CM22 6SP	CM6 2JA	CM23 5QS	CM6 1SY	CM6 2SE	CM24 8SS	CM22 7ET
CM22 6TG	CB11 4SN	CM6 3RG	CB11 4HB	CM24 8HG	CM23 5QH	CM6	CB11 3RW
CM22 6LB	SG8 8RP	CB10 1PA	CB11 4HA	CB11 3LB	CM6 1WF	CM22 7RF	CB11 3QG
CB11 3PX	CM22 7PH	CB11 3SB	CB10 1PT	CM24 8DT	CM6 2BQ	CB11 3AH	CB11 3PP
CB11 4HB	CB10 1PT	Takeley	CM6 3NG	CB10 1PZ	CB11 4BT	CB10 2AX	CM24 8NW
CB11 3LN	CM6 2FG	CM6 1BX	Cb11 3QN	CM23 1HD	CM22 6TH	CB10 2NE	CM6 3NW
CM23 1AX	CB10 2EG	CM22 6HL	CM6 1WZ	CM3 1QQ	CB11 3AA	CM23 1BT	CB11
CM22 7 RZ	CM24 8QB	CB10 2SS	CM6 1UL	CM22 7	CM6 3EY	CB10 1AW	CB10 2PD
CM24 8FB	CM24 8SH	CB10 1PZ	CB10 2DJ	CM77 8QW	CM6 3SP	CB11 3AA	CB114BA
CB10 1TS	CB10 2RX	CB11 4PQ	CB11 3LF	CB10 1BZ	CM22 6SH	CM6 3EP	CB10 1NR
CM7 4SH	CB11 4QX	CM22 7TA	CM24 8HH	CB10 2XW	CM23 5QP	CM22 6RN	CB10 2SR
CB10 2AN	CM22 6JS	CB11 4RY	CM6 2AY	CM6 3QS	CB11 3GP	CM6 3QH	CB11 3BX
CM6 3RG	CB10 1WA	CM6 1SB	CM22 6TG		CB11 3XE	CM6 3TU	CM23 5QL
	CB10 2TJ	CM6 3FH	CM6 1PL	CM24 8RJ	CM23 5OR	CM6 2LA	CM24 8UT
CB10 1PE	CB10 1JW	CM6 2AA	CM22 6HA	CM23 5QD	CM6 2QT	CB11 4SB	CM3 1QB
CM6 1BY	CB10 2HG	CM22 6LH	CB10 2DP	CB10 1BD	CM6 2	CB11 3LZ	CM22 6AF
CM6 3GW	CM24 8HG	CM6 2BE	CB11 4DW	CM24 8UX	CB11 3PP	CM24 8JJ	CB11 4QS
CB10 2UA	CB10 2BD	CM6 2HQ	CB11 3GP	CB11 4AL	CB11 4XG	CB11	CB11 4XB
CM22 7QS	CM6 1TA	CB11 3SE	CM6 2SE	CM6 3GL	CM6 2AA	CM6 2AA	CM1 4QU

CM6 3EG	CB10 2BU	TEST	CB113EN	Cb10	CM24 8LB	cm62ld	Cm6 2bs
CB11 4JU	CM6 2AY	cm6 1qw	CM6	CM227HG	cm22 6ra	CB11 4JU	cb11 4ds
CM22 6LD	CB10 2EF	CB11 4QR	CB11 4QY	CB214PQ	CM24 8HJ	CM23 1BP	CB11 3JW
SG8 8QT	CB11 3HB	cm22 6by	CM6 3PZ	cb11 3ex	CB10 2DF	CB11	cb10 1aa
CM24 8AN	CB10	cm22 6ay	cb11 4de	CB10 2BH	cb10 1eh	cm1 4rd	
CM22 6LS	CM7 4SH	cm23 1aa	CB11 3D	CB114QP	CM6 2RB	CM6 1DT	CM24 8HP
Cb11 4ae							

Respondents in receipt of LCTS

(% of those who answered the question)

No	909 (90.3%)
Yes	98 (9.7%)
Not provided	82

Respondents in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)

(% of those who answered the question)

Yes	83 (91.2%)
No	9 (9.9%)
Not provided	6

Committee: Scrutiny

Agenda Item

Date: 17 November 2015

11

Title: Enforcement Scoping Report

Author: Richard Auty, Assistant Director Corporate Services Item for decision

Summary

1. The Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting in September that it wished to review enforcement. This report presents a scoping document and a Cabinet report which provides background information on the service.

Recommendations

2. The committee agrees terms of reference and how it wishes to proceed with the review.

Financial Implications

3. None. There are no costs associated with this report.

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Reviewing Enforcement will require communication with internal and external stakeholders
Community Safety	Enforcement plays a role in community safety
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	Enforcement plays a role in ensuring public health and safety
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None

Workforce/Workplace	Scrutiny reviews always have an impact on officer time
---------------------	--

Situation

- 6. At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 September, members agreed that Enforcement would be a topic for review.
- 7. A scoping report has been prepared in the established format, listing suggested terms of reference. Members need to agree terms of reference for the review and also how they wish the review to proceed.
- 8. A report on Enforcement went to the Cabinet meeting on 22 October. This report contains considerable information on the activities of the Enforcement Team and is included in this report for the Scrutiny Committee’s reference.

Risk Analysis

9.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The committee is unable to agree terms of reference, preventing the review from proceeding	1 – the committee has already agreed that Enforcement should be a topic for review	2 – the review cannot take place without agreed terms of reference and therefore any recommendations for service improvement would not be forthcoming, but there would be no impact on day-to-day enforcement activities	Suggested terms of reference have been included in the scoping document to aid members in deciding how to approach the review

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Scoping Report for Scrutiny Committee Review

Review Topic	Enforcement			
Scoping Report to go to meeting on	17 November 2015			
Review to take place at meeting on	To be confirmed			
Review format required at meeting <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	Written report (to be supplied at least five working days before the meeting)	TBC	Presentation	TBC
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Simon Howell			
Lead Officer	TBC			
Stakeholders	Uttlesford residents and businesses. UDC departments, on whose behalf the Enforcement Team carries out its duties.			

Suggested Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the structure of Enforcement within the council • To review how decisions are reached as to when it is appropriate to take action • To review the resourcing of the service • To understand the limitations in law in relation to enforcement, such as the test of expediency • To understand the processes and priorities of the different elements of Enforcement, including planning, licensing and environmental matters
-------------------------------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand how Enforcement works in its wider sense, for example which other agencies are responsible for elements of enforcement • To understand what service agreements/protocols are in place with regard to delivery by outside agencies
Suggested Purpose and/or Objective of the Review	<p>To determine whether Enforcement services are meeting the expectations of the council and stakeholders and whether those expectations are realistic</p> <p>To ensure that Enforcement is being delivered effectively for the benefit of the district</p>
Methodology/Approach	<p>Either:</p> <p>Request a written report and officer attendance at a future meeting to address the agreed terms of reference</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Establish a Task and Finish Group to gather information on the agreed terms of reference, reporting back with recommendations to the committee</p>
Attendees Required	TBC

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 22 October 2015

16

Title: Enforcement

Author: Cllr Simon Howell

Item for information

Summary

1. This report is to inform members of the cabinet of the operation of the Enforcement Team within the council.

Recommendations

2. That members note this report.

Financial Implications

3. As set out in the body of this report.

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

6. The Enforcement Team in Uttlesford District Council is responsible for a wide range of functions. The main areas of activity are planning, licensing (in respect of licensed drivers, operators and vehicles and also licensed premises); environmental health street scene (e.g. abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping) and smoking in the workplace legislation.
7. The Enforcement Team comprises a team leader and three enforcement officers all of whom are full-time. The budget for the service for the year 2015/16 is £149,630.
8. The council has an enforcement strategy with regard to planning matters which was adopted by the then Development Control Committee on 1 June 2011. The strategy appears on the council's website at <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/1982/Planning-Enforcement> . The emphasis is on trying to secure compliance with the legislation without taking formal action where possible. The Enforcement Team's mission statement is "to prevent and detect crime and breaches in regulatory legislation. To achieve compliance by education, negotiation and where necessary by enforcement action".
9. In the first instance therefore where a breach of planning control has been identified, enforcement officers will explain to the developer what the breach is and endeavour to secure compliance by way of negotiation. Where this fails, the council has a range of options open to it. Where a developer has failed to comply with a condition attached to a planning condition a breach of condition notice may be served to require compliance with that condition. An enforcement notice may be served for any breach of planning control (i.e. unauthorised development or development in breach of condition). There is no appeal against a breach of condition notice, although a decision to serve such a notice may be challenged by way of judicial review. There is a right of appeal against an enforcement notice. Where a developer lodges an appeal against an enforcement notice, this has the effect of suspending the notice until such time as the appeal has been determined. The appeal process therefore effectively delays securing compliance with planning legislation.
10. In addition to these remedies in cases of urgency the council may serve a Stop Notice and where an individual frequently breaches planning control an injunction may be applied for.
11. The Enforcement Team have opened 466 planning enforcement cases between 1 January 2015 and 9 October 2015. In round figures, 39% of these were in respect of work carried out without planning permission; 30% for breaches of conditions attached to planning permission; 13% for unauthorised changes of use; 8.5% for unauthorised works to listed buildings and 7% in respect of unlawful advertisements. The remaining 2.5% encompassed breaches of tree preservation orders; removal of hedgerows; untidy sites and high hedges.

12. Seven enforcement notices have been served since the 1 January 2015 including 3 in relation to airport related parking.
13. On two occasions the Enforcement Team took direct action to secure compliance with the legislation. Cabinet members will recall approving the finance for the clearance of land at Broxted. In addition, the team took direct action in respect of a breach of the High Hedges legislation where all other efforts to secure compliance had failed.
14. Planning enforcement is not a duty. It is a power. Further that power is not unlimited. The council may only take enforcement action if it considers it expedient to do so. "Expediency" can be a difficult subject for the public to come to terms with. There is frequently a perception that action should be taken merely because there has been a breach of planning control. The council's approach to expediency is set out in paragraph 1.06 of the Enforcement Strategy. In essence enforcement action should not be taken merely to rectify a breach or to seek retribution. Action should only be taken if the nature of the breach itself causes material harm of a planning nature. Expediency can cover a number of issues. The breach may be so minor (e.g. a very small amount above the permitted development rights), that the breach can be considered only a technical breach not worth pursuing. Even if the breach is more than a technical breach then a decision must be considered as to whether planning permission would have been considered being granted for the breach. Although in circumstances where permission would have likely been accepted, a planning application would be invited, if one is not submitted then unless particular conditions would need to be attached to any permission, formal action should not be pursued and the matter is closed for lack of expediency. Planning and enforcement officers meet every week to review files to determine whether there is evidence of a breach of planning control and if so whether it is expedient to take enforcement action if compliance cannot be achieved through negotiation. Where a decision is taken to close a case for lack of expediency officers endeavour to explain to the complainant and other interested parties the reason for that decision.
15. For the period from the 1 January 2015 to the 9 October 2015 the Enforcement Team also carried out 112 investigations into various licensing issues. Eighty-six of these involved the private hire/hackney carriage trades. Eighteen were complaints under the Licensing Act 2003. There were 8 miscellaneous other matters. As a result of the team's work the council has brought a total of 12 prosecutions for a range of offences including making false statements to obtain licences; failing to report accidents and driving unlicensed vehicles or driving without a driver's licence. The team have also carried out a number of road spot checks in conjunction with Essex Police which have resulted in some of these prosecutions.
16. With regard to complaints made under the Licensing Act 2003, to date compliance has been secured by negotiation and no formal action has been necessary.
17. The Council has a duty to remove any vehicles abandoned in the district and has power to remove untaxed vehicles under an agency agreement with the

DVLA. Not all vehicles reported as abandoned can be treated as such. From 1 January 2015 the team have investigated 103 complaints of abandoned or untaxed vehicles resulting in the removal and destruction of 27. The majority of the rest of the vehicles were removed by the owners.

18. The team have investigated 47 cases of fly tipping since 1 January 2015. Unfortunately there were no eyewitnesses to these events and in the majority of cases the waste contained no identifying material. However in 2 cases there was identifying matter and prosecutions are pending in both of these cases.
19. 48 fixed penalty notices have been issued for breaches of the smoking at work legislation. 44 have been paid. 2 are pending prosecution and in the remaining 2 the time for payment had not lapsed at the time of presentation of this report.

Risk Analysis

20. There are no risks associated with this report

Committee: Scrutiny

Agenda Item

Date: 17 November 2015

12

Title: Draft Air Quality Action Plan

Author: Richard Auty, Assistant Director Corporate Services Item for information

Summary

1. The Council is preparing a new Air Quality Action Plan to improve air quality in the Saffron Walden Air Quality Management Area. The document will go out for consultation with key stakeholders including Defra and Essex County Council, along with the public and local businesses in early 2016.

Recommendations

2. Scrutiny Committee members provide feedback to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services on the content of the draft Action Plan.

Financial Implications

3. There are no costs associated with providing feedback on the plan.

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The Action Plan will be the subject of consultation
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	The Action Plan aims to improve air quality
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	The Action plan aims to encourage alternative forms of transport
Ward-specific impacts	The Action Plan is focussed on Saffron Walden

Workforce/Workplace	None
---------------------	------

Situation

- 6. During the process of gathering member suggestions for Scrutiny work topics, the subject of air quality management was raised. As the Council will be consulting on a new Air Quality Action Plan early next year, it was thought appropriate to bring the draft plan to the Scrutiny Committee.
- 7. It is not intended that the Action Plan goes to Cabinet prior to consultation; however Cllr Susan Barker, the relevant Cabinet Member, has indicated she will consider feedback on the plan from members of the Scrutiny Committee prior to its publication.
- 8. The following background information on the draft Action Plan has been provided by Ann Lee-Moore, Environmental Health Officer:
- 9. “The Council last produced an Air Quality Action Plan in 2009 following declaration of three small Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) centred on the most congested road junctions in the centre of Saffron Walden. Further monitoring of air quality was subsequently undertaken which revealed a wider area of concern where air quality objectives were not being met, and in 2012 a larger AQMA was declared by the Council covering the central area of the town.
- 10. “The Environment Act 1995 requires the Council to produce an Action Plan for the new AQMA, setting out the measures that the Council intends to take to meet the objectives and to maintain levels below the objective for the life of the plan.
- 11. “Air quality monitoring and modelling carried out by the Uttlesford District Council (UDC) indicates that air quality is generally good in the district but at some junctions within the main town, Saffron Walden, the objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) has not been met in recent years or has been very slightly below the objective.
- 12. “The draft Action Plan will be subject to a period of statutory consultation before the final plan is adopted by the Council.”

Risk Analysis

13.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
None			

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Draft

Air Quality Action Plan 2015

Saffron Walden Air Quality Management Area



Contents

Executive Summary	1
Part 1. Proposed measures	
1 Introduction	
1.1 Purpose of the action plan	2
1.2 Details of the area	4
1.3 Defining the problem	6
2 Action Plan proposals	8
2.1 Key objectives	8
2.2 Policy measures	8
2.3 Traffic management	15
2.4 Corporate action by UDC	17
2.5 Bus services	19
2.6 Raising awareness	19
2.7 Low emission vehicles	20
2.8 Heavy goods vehicles	22
2.9 Monitoring	22
3 Outcomes and timescales	23
4 Consultation	28
5 Progress monitoring and review	29
Part 2. Supporting Information	30
6 Importance of air quality	30
6.1 Impact of poor air quality	30
6.2 Sources of air pollution	31
7 Local air quality	32
7.1 Background levels of nitrogen dioxide	32
7.2 Recent trends in air quality within Saffron Walden	33
7.3 Levels of reduction needed	35
7.4 Source apportionment	36
Appendices	37
A.1 Action Pan 2009	37
A.2 Legislative framework	38
A.3 Saffron Walden nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube and station data 2007-2014	40
References	41
Glossary	42

SAFFRON WALDEN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA

DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2015

Executive Summary

The Environment Act 1995 requires all Local Authorities to review air quality within their districts. If any air quality objective set out in regulations under the Act is not likely to be achieved then the local authority must designate the affected area as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Act then requires an Action Plan to be produced for these designated areas, setting out the actions that the Council intends to take to meet the objectives and to maintain levels below the objective for the life of the plan.

Air quality monitoring and modelling carried out by the Uttlesford District Council (UDC) indicates that air quality is generally good in the district but at some junctions within the main town, Saffron Walden, the objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) has not been met in recent years or has been very slightly below the objective.

The Council last produced an Air Quality Action Plan in 2009 following declaration of three small AQMAs centred on the most congested road junctions in the centre of Saffron Walden. Further monitoring of air quality was subsequently undertaken which revealed a wider area of concern, and in 2012 a larger AQMA was declared by the Council covering the central area of the town.

In the absence of significant industrial emissions, the main source of air pollution within Saffron Walden is transport, in particular to congested traffic, and heavy goods vehicles. The proposed actions therefore focus on improving transport infrastructure, encouraging residents and businesses in the town to reduce car use or switch to non-car travel, and encouraging the uptake of low emission vehicles. Whilst the actions are designed to improve air quality within the AQMA, they will also benefit the wider population.

This draft Action Plan will be subject to a period of consultation before the final plan is adopted.

An annual audit of the adopted action plan will be undertaken to assess progress of implementing the measures and to ensure the proposed actions remain appropriate. An annual review will be also be reported as part of the Local Air Quality Management reporting process.

For further information concerning this report, please contact:

Environmental Health, Uttlesford District Council
Tel: 01799 510510
Email: environmentalhealth@uttlesford.gov.uk

Part 1 Proposed Measures

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Action Plan

Uttlesford District Council is committed to improving air quality, and consequently the quality of life of both residents and visitors, in areas where poor air quality has been identified. Polluted air has the potential to impact on people's health, the economy and the environment. It is commonly associated with congested roads.

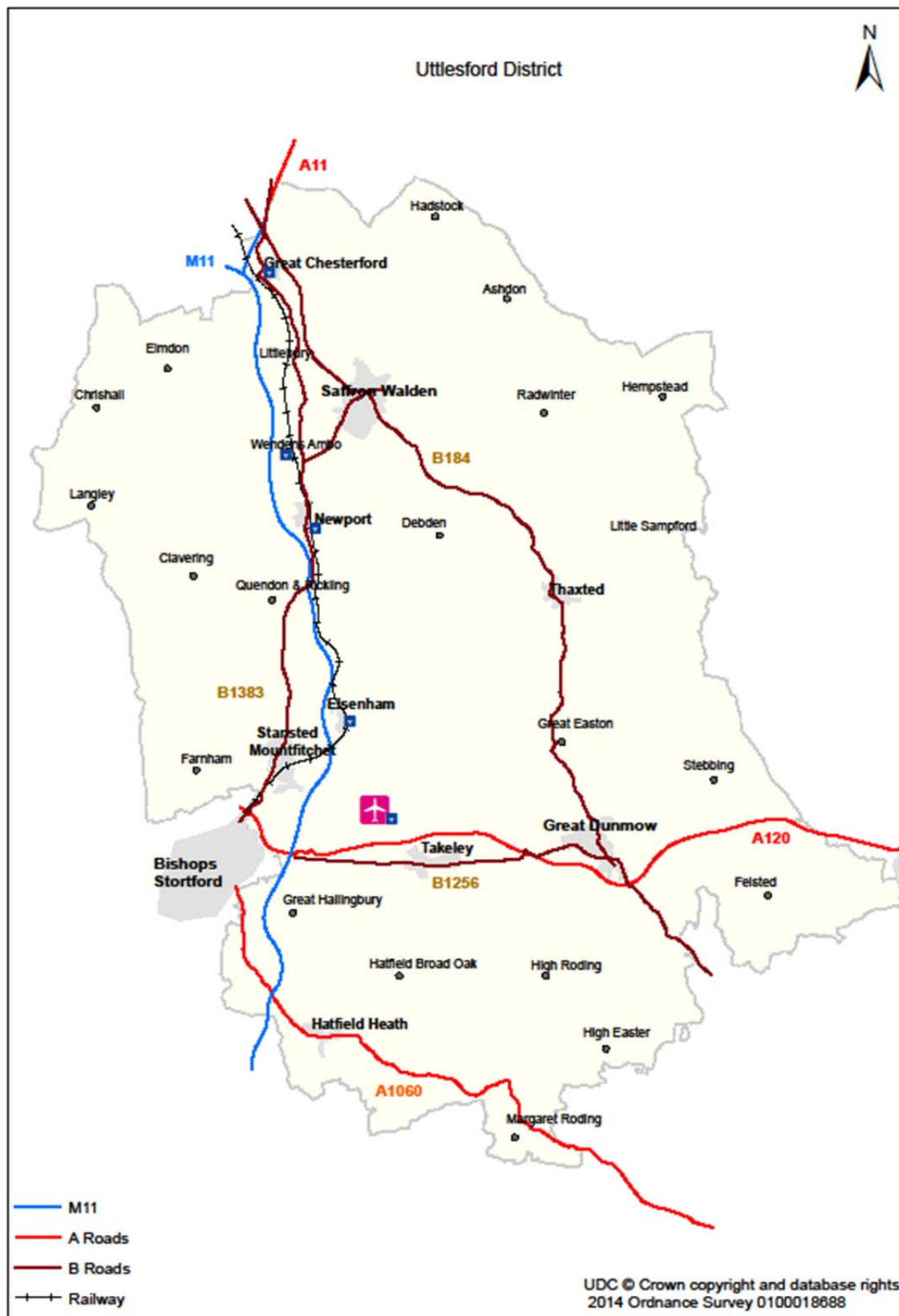
This local Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been developed under the Local Air Quality Management review and assessment regime as set out in the Environment Act 1995. If the review and assessment process indicates that a national air quality objective (as detailed below) is unlikely to be achieved, the Local Authority must designate an area where this occurs as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Following the declaration process, the Act requires that the authority develops an Air Quality Action Plan setting out a range of local measures which the authority intends to take with the aim of improving air quality to a level to where it no longer exceeds the relevant objective.

Before the plan can be adopted it must be subject to consultation with key stakeholders as outlined in Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance LAQM.PG(09)[1] and must also be appraised and accepted by the Secretary of State as being suitable for purpose. A key objective will be to work in partnership with the highways authority, Essex County Council (ECC). Not all of the potential actions discussed in this document are likely to be formally adopted but are actively under consideration.

Uttlesford is a largely rural district in the western part of Essex. The largest towns are Saffron Walden in the north and Great Dunmow in the south of the district. Both are growing although the largest new settlements are located in and around Great Dunmow. The M11 and A120 run through the district and Stansted Airport is located in the south west of the district.

Whilst the Council monitors air quality throughout the district, it is Saffron Walden town centre which has consistently shown the highest levels of air pollutants, along with areas very close to the M11, where residential exposure is not present. Uttlesford District Council last produced an action plan in 2009 following declaration of three small AQMAs centred around junctions in the centre of Saffron Walden where air quality objectives were not being achieved. Since then a further junction suffered raised levels and rather than declare a fourth small AQMA, the Council decided to revoke the three existing AQMAs and declare a large AQMA encompassing the previous and new areas of concern. This Action Plan replaces the 2009 Action Plan and covers the new AQMA.

Figure 1: Uttlesford District



1.2 Details of the area

UDC currently monitors air quality using passive diffusion tubes and automatic analysers. Monitoring for NO₂ using diffusion tubes has been undertaken in the central part of Saffron Walden since 1993 and at a continuous analyser located in Hill Street. Three diffusion tubes are located adjacent to the continuous analyser for tube calibration purposes.

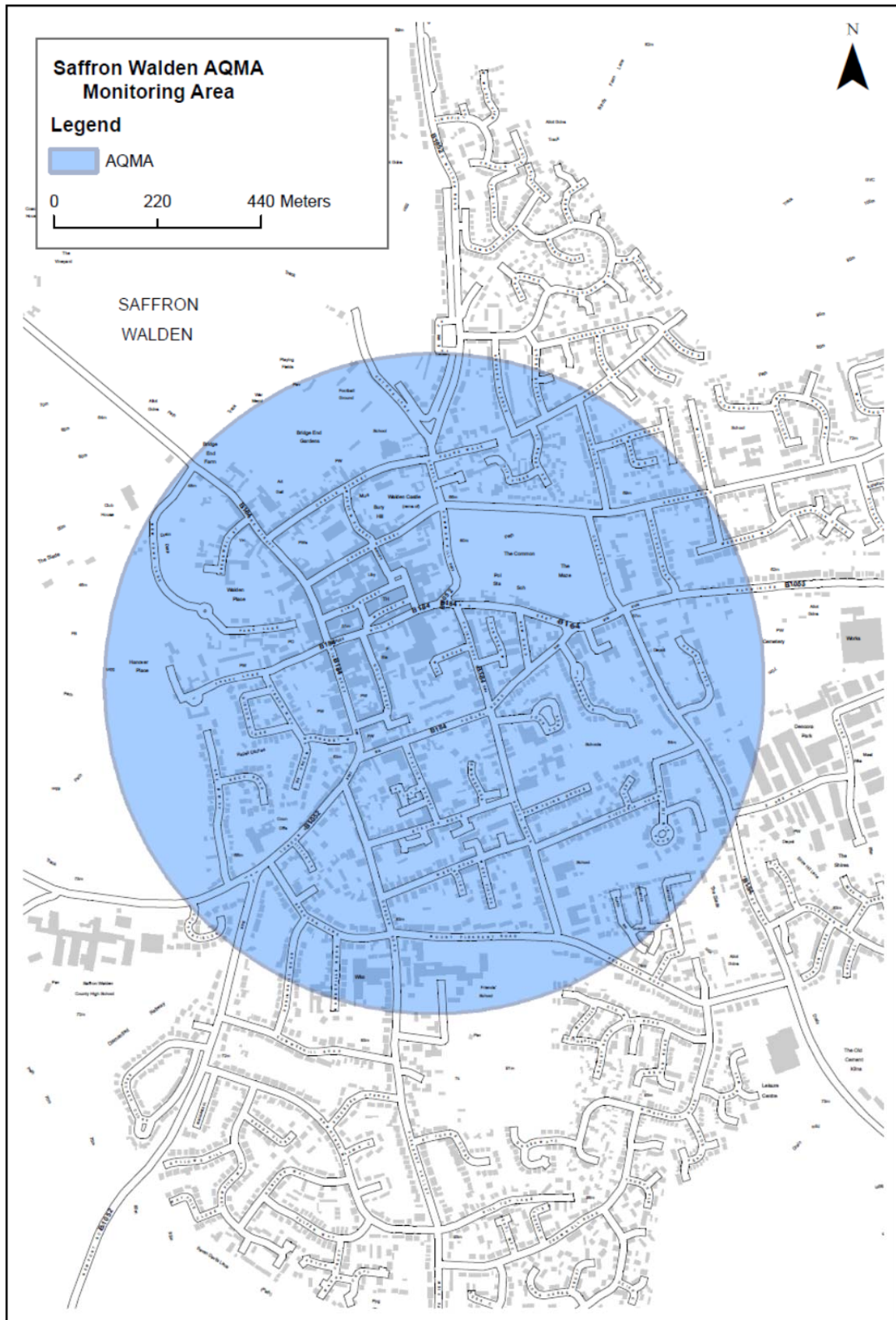
Initially levels in Saffron Walden were above the annual mean objective but in line with national trends related to the introduction of improved engine technology, levels dropped below the objective. In 2007 this trend began to reverse probably due to increases in traffic and congestion. Background levels are monitored in Gibson Close, and levels here have always been well below the objective.

In 2007, AQMAs were declared in three small areas centred on junctions where the breach of the objective had been identified by diffusion tubes. In 2008 additional tubes were placed in the central area and a further junction of concern was identified over subsequent years.

Revocation of the three small AQMAs was approved by UDC Cabinet in May 2012 and the larger Saffron Walden AQMA was declared in September 2012. The geographical extent of the new AQMA is a circle of 1400m diameter centred on TL 53950 38300, Elm Grove, in the town centre.

A map showing the location of the AQMA is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Map of AQMA Boundary



1.3 Defining the problem in Saffron Walden

The rural nature of the district leads to a dependence on the private car for transport.

Elevated emissions are associated with high volumes of slow moving traffic, when engines are operating very inefficiently, exacerbated if vehicles are undertaking short journeys with a cold engine. The topography of Saffron Walden is such that the centre is low lying in relation to the outer areas which reduces the amount of dispersion of emissions by air flow. A major factor is also the layout of buildings in the historic centre. Tall buildings on both sides of narrow streets lead to recirculation of air flow that can trap pollutants, resulting in reduced dispersion and elevated concentrations. Many residential properties are located close to the roadside and consequently to vehicle emissions.

Traffic queues build at the major junctions predominantly during the morning and late afternoon peak travel periods for school and commuter journeys. Exceedances of the national objective for NO₂ have occurred over recent years at or close to the following junctions within the AQMA:

- Thaxted Road/East St /Radwinter Road/Chaters Hill
- High Street/ George St/Abbey Lane
- Debden Road/London Road
- Bridge Street/Castle St

The location of the four junctions is shown in Figure 3 together with the monitoring sites.

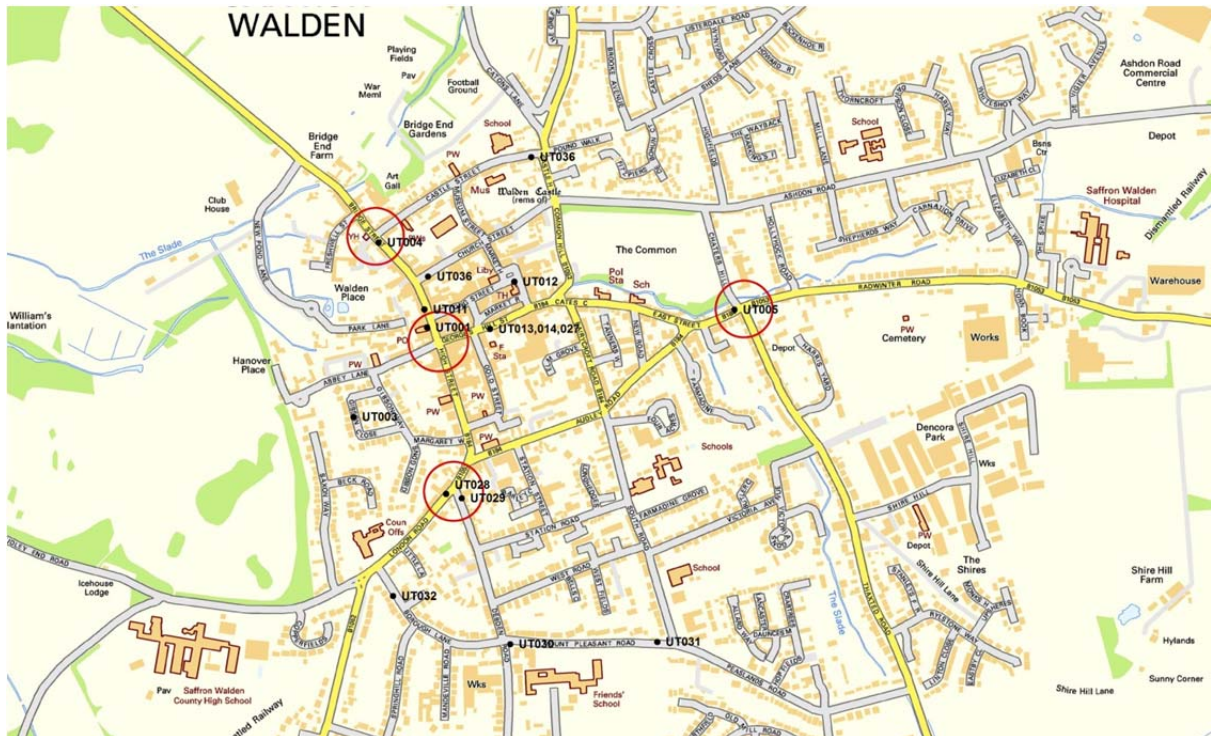
The Radwinter Road junction with Thaxted Road is controlled by traffic lights, and is used by traffic entering the town from the villages to the east of Saffron Walden and from the town of Haverhill. Traffic from the south will include journeys from Thaxted accessing the town centre and the edge of town supermarket on Radwinter Road. Residential units are located close to the road side on three out of four arms of the junction.

The High Street/George St/Abbey Lane junction is controlled by traffic lights. Traffic on the north and south arms of the junction is often delayed during the working day by delivery vehicles at commercial premises on either side of the junction. Consequent queues build up on the southern approach to impact on the mini-roundabout controlled junction at Debden Road and London Road. At other times, notably during the school run and commuter hours, weight of traffic causes the junction to exceed capacity.

The Castle Street and Bridge Street junction is used by traffic entering the town from the north, which often results in queues building to the north and south of the junction to allow vehicles to negotiate the narrowing of the road at this point. A weight restriction applies to this route, and HGV's need to use the south west access route via Newport Road to enter the town from this direction. Residential accommodation is located on all sides of the

junction close to the road at road level, and some commercial units to the south of the junction in the High Street have residential units at first floor level.

Figure 3 Diffusion tube sites and location of exceedances



NO₂ levels monitored in Saffron Walden since 2007 are set out in Appendix 3.

2. Action Plan proposals

2.1 Key Objectives

- 1) To outline the actions which can be taken by UDC and partner organisations to work towards reducing NO₂ levels within the declared AQMA as early as possible to below relevant National Air Quality Objectives at relevant receptor locations.
- 2) The actions taken must avoid causing displacement of emissions from one hotspot to another such that there is the potential for new exceedances at other locations.
- 3) The actions taken must include measures designed to reduce emissions from vehicles generally and also seek to contribute to a reduction of CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere for climate change mitigation reasons.

Indicators will be set to assess progress of implementation of the measures identified where they can be assessed quantitatively with regard to the impact on NO₂ levels. Evidence that all the options have been considered on grounds of cost-effectiveness and feasibility will be provided as part of that process.

2.2 Policy measures

National Planning Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [2] adopted in March 2012 guides local strategic planning and sets out the government's approach to planning. Central to the approach is sustainable development including focusing significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable, ensuring design gives priority to pedestrian and cycle travel and providing infrastructure necessary to support low emission travel choices.

The framework suggests significant development should be accompanied by Travel Plans for residents and supporting those for new businesses, and car parking restrained to encourage other modes of transport to become quicker and more convenient.

Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in an AQMA is consistent with the local air quality action plan. Specific to Air Quality, paragraph 124 provides that "*Planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan.*"

National Planning Practice Guidance [3] has since been published which provides guiding principles on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on air quality. The guidance advises that the Local Plan may need to consider: *“ways in which new development would be appropriate in locations where air quality is or likely to be a concern and not give rise to unacceptable risks from pollution. This could be through, for example, identifying measures for offsetting the impact on air quality arising from new development including supporting measures in an air quality action plan or low emissions strategy where applicable.”*

Uttlesford Local Plan

Planning and development control plays an important role in minimising the potential detrimental impacts that new developments may have on local air quality. Air quality is taken into account during the planning process, and the potential impact of major developments on the AQMA is a material consideration, ensuring that all practicable mitigation measures are implemented where necessary.

The commitment of UDC to protecting users of residential properties from long term exposure to poor air quality is reflected in planning policies within the Local Plan which set out a number of general development control criteria. The current Local Plan was adopted in January 2005 and includes the following policies relating to air quality:

Policy ENV 13 – *“Development that would involve users being exposed on an extended long-term basis to poor air quality outdoors near ground level will not be permitted.”*

Policy GEN 1 provides that development will only be permitted if *“development encourages movement by means other than by driving a car”*

Policy GEN6 requires development to make provision for the required supporting infrastructure, including transport provision. Developers may be required to provide a financial contribution towards:

- junction improvements
- provision of cycle/footways
- public transport
- infrastructure to facilitate low emission vehicles
- additional monitoring of air quality
- parking schemes to reduce road obstruction.

The development of a new Local Plan is currently under way, following withdrawal of the emerging Local Plan in January 2015. The development presents an opportunity to adopt policies which support sustainable transport and reduced car use. A revision of the strategic housing assessment will be carried out which will have a bearing on the extent of growth in Saffron Walden in future years. Current planning policies will be replaced and new

policies developed before finalisation of the plan, with submission scheduled for August 2016.

The revised policies need to ensure that:

- air quality is a material consideration for development likely to produce vehicle trips which will disperse through the AQMA junctions and associated road links or increase the number of people exposed to emissions above the air quality objectives
- appropriate conditions are applied to require mitigation measures or planning obligations sought to support mitigation outside the control of the developer where the proposed development does not lead to significant deterioration in air quality or prevent sustained compliance with air quality objectives
- applications are supported by an Air Quality Assessment where necessary providing detailed analysis of the level of extra traffic generated, taking account of the cumulative impact of development. Approvals for development will seek to ensure that air quality will not worsen in or around the AQMA as a result.
- residential, and commercial development where appropriate, is sited within comfortable walking and cycling distance of amenities and where it can be linked to services and facilities by a range of transport options
- energy efficiency measures and the use of renewable sources of energy will be adopted in the construction of new builds to reduce emissions from heating systems which contribute to local air pollutant emissions
- development and transport planning is co-ordinated to reduce the need to travel by car, and increase public transport use, cycling and walking
- travel plans are submitted for large developments, and transport assessments to demonstrate how a reduction in car travel will be achieved.

The revised planning policies developed under the new Local Plan will be broadly consistent with the provisions of the NPPF.

Travel Plans are currently expected to accompany major new developments sites, with clear proposals for reducing travel to and from the site by car. The plan would be expected to contain a series of initiatives to encourage the uptake of low emission fuels and technology, and local journeys being carried out on foot or by cycling, also to raise awareness of the benefits of reducing car travel. Information should be provided on public transport, and car sharing schemes. Vouchers can be made available to new occupiers towards bike purchase or bus travel. The plan would be required to be communicated to respective occupiers and updated regularly. Travel plan

monitoring fees can be secured through planning obligations, to support monitoring of traffic generated by the development and identify new initiatives if necessary.

Infrastructure would be expected to be provided to a set standard to facilitate the outcome of the plan. Larger developments may need to include bus stops where appropriate, and every new home could be provided with a charging point for plug in vehicles and safe storage facilities for bicycles, or in communal areas where not feasible. These measures would follow the NPPF requirement to exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport.

For smaller developments, a travel statement would be expected, focussing on site measures to encourage sustainable travel.

Where new commercial development is approved, new businesses would be expected to produce travel plans for their staff to encourage alternative methods of reaching the workplace to car travel.

Currently guidance is provided to developers on an ad hoc basis. An air quality Technical Guidance Note adopted by the Council can be made available to developers to provide clarity to the planning process in relation to air quality. It would set out requirements for the district as a whole, and the minimum information for an air quality assessment, including acceptable modelling inputs and criteria for assessing the significance of the impact. Reference can also be made to mitigation strategies which will be expected by UDC and provision for financial contributions.

Proposed action 1: to develop new policies where needed or transfer existing policies to the new local plan which will seek to minimise the impact of air quality on the health of local communities and the environment

Proposed action 2: to produce a publicly available guidance document for air quality

The previous draft local plan identified three areas of land in Saffron Walden for development in addition to existing local plan sites. A proportion of these sites have been granted planning consent since declaration of the AQMA and mitigation of the effects on air quality will be provided in most cases, either through conditions or through the use of planning obligations where measures are beyond the control of the developer. Table 1 shows the details of the most recent applications and the measures secured.

Table 1: Recent planning applications with developer contributions and/or planning conditions relevant to air quality

Planning Application	Section 106 agreement	Conditions relevant to air quality
<p>UTT/0400/09/OP:130 dwellings and B1 employment land Ashdon Road</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>UTT/0407/09/OP 15 residential units off Little Walden Road</p> <p>Completed 2015</p>	<p>£250,000 held for 10 years by ECC towards Thaxted Rd/Radwinter Rd junction improvements or such other cycle/highway works as deemed necessary in the vicinity of the land £3000 to monitor travel plan</p>	<p>Cycle parking, transport information packs, residential and business travel plans,</p>
<p>UTT/13/1981/OP 60 bed care home +</p> <p>UTT/13/3406/FUL 52 dwellings</p> <p>Both at Radwinter Road</p> <p>Incomplete 2015</p>	<p>£3000 x 2 towards Saffron Walden to Audley End cycle path</p>	
<p>UTT/13/3467/OP 230 dwellings + B1 office space + extra care housing or 200 dwellings + B1 office space + extra care housing + primary school</p> <p>Land off Radwinter Road</p> <p>Incomplete 2015</p>	<p>£5000 towards Ashdon Road parking scheme or other such scheme as deemed necessary. Bus service into the development, capacity enhancements at London Rd/Borough Lane and Newport Rd/Audley Rd junctions. £473,000 towards highway mitigation works £26,290 towards cycle/pedestrian link between Monks Hill and the school and Tesco site on Radwinter Road, £3000 to monitor travel plans, £112,700 towards cycle link to Audley End</p>	<p>Transport information packs, residential and business travel plans</p> <p>NB. One of the key mitigation measures for this development was a link road between Thaxted Rd and Radwinter Rd which is subject to review since withdrawal of the local plan. No alternative measures are currently planned. (see para 3.4)</p>
<p>UTT/13/2423/FUL Builders merchant, B1 employment land, commercial units including retail, hotel, and 167 dwellings. Land off Ashdon Road</p> <p>Incomplete 2015</p>	<p>Residential and business travel plans, bus service enhancements, contributions to : parking scheme on Ashdon Road, cycle link to Audley End and town centre junction capacity enhancements</p>	<p>Cycle link onto Ashdon Road, electric vehicle charging points, pedestrian and cycle signage to town centre and Audley End</p>

UTT/13/0268/FUL Retail warehouse units, garden centre, a discount food store, café. Land off Thaxted Road Partially complete 2015	£3000 to monitor travel plan	Cycle/pedestrian link to Thaxted Rd, cycle parking
--	------------------------------	--

Essex Local Transport Plan

The Essex LTP3 [4] sets out the highway authority's strategy for transport from 2011 until 2026 and commits ECC to the following policies which will benefit air quality by reducing congestion and improving traffic flow:

- supporting and encouraging the use of low carbon travel, focussing on journeys to school and work
- enabling greater travel choice by improving public transport and facilities for alternative modes of transport to car travel
- examining opportunities to introduce electric vehicles and alternative fuels
- assisting travel planning for new developments to encourage walking and cycling
- ensuring new developments provide safe, attractive and convenient routes for walking and cycling to everyday amenities
- ensuring all schools have active travel plans
- facilitating better broadband coverage to encourage home working
- ensuring the road network operates efficiently including minimising disruption from roadworks
- adopting measures to reduce emissions from the ECC fleet vehicles
- ensuring HGV's follow the most appropriate routes

Schools in the town attract a large number of car and bus journeys, many travelling through the AQMA, and a reduction in the volume of school related traffic at peak hours will benefit congestion and air quality. Many of the buses used for school travel are aged diesel vehicles with a disproportionately high contribution to harmful emissions. The LTP commits to working with education providers to improve access to schools by walking and cycling and to encouraging schools to update their existing travel plans on a regular basis, with the aim of using their own resources to reduce car journeys by staff, parents and pupils. Where new educational facilities are to be provided in association with residential development, ECC will assist in the development of travel plans, and cycle storage facilities and footpaths on their own land will be provided to assist access to the facility. Provision of cycle/footpath links from new developments to new or existing schools will be supported by ECC.

The LTP commits to helping businesses to develop Travel Plans. Larger employers, including UDC and ECC are in a strong position to influence the timing and methods by which their employees travel to work. Car sharing

schemes, flexible and home working, encouraging and subsidising the use of public transport, and rewarding people who walk or cycle to work, are all ways in which congestion at peak periods can be reduced. The impact of journeys carried out for work purposes can be reduced by rewarding car sharing and financial incentives for choosing small or low emission vehicles.

Increasing the number of walking and cycling journeys to access school, workplaces or amenities would have wider benefits for an individual's health and wellbeing associated with increased activity, for example reduction in obesity and cardio vascular disease. Reducing the number of short car journeys which have a disproportionate negative impact on air quality in the town would also have wider public health benefits such as improved pedestrian safety and reduced noise from traffic.

Under the LTP objective of improving and increasing amounts of cycling, ECC produced a Cycling Strategy for Uttlesford in 2014 [5]. Included in the strategy are proposals for appropriate cycling infrastructure and the development of off road routes in and around Saffron Walden. On some routes, the narrow width of historic streets within the town constricts the space available for cyclists. Cyclist training for all ages may increase the appeal of using the facilities provided.

One of the first dedicated routes to be developed is the route to the closest train station to Saffron Walden, Audley End in the village of Wendens Ambo about 2.5 miles away from the town centre. In order to encourage more cyclists along the route, particularly rail users, a route along Wenden Road designed in consultation with local stakeholders has recently been provided. A significant increase in the use of cycling to access rail services would assist in reducing congestion in Saffron Walden.

ECC have committed to further develop cycle links, including protected off road paths through the town by utilising existing footways, and to make the existing road network safer and more attractive for cyclists. Good signage to cycle ways including direction markers will assist in making the routes easy to use.

A continuous route under consideration in the longer term is the feasibility of a route to link the town to Cambridge connecting to Cambridge County Council's cycle network, with possible funding contributions from Cambridge County Council for the route northwards from Great Chesterford railway station, which would benefit Cambridgeshire residents as well.

The LTP commits to providing a residential travel pack to house purchasers, to include routes for cycling, footpaths and public transport information.

The quality of mobile phone coverage and broadband service in the Saffron Walden area can be a barrier to homeworking amongst the community as a whole. UDC is in a position to support improved coverage by facilitating necessary infrastructure in line with ECC targets.

Proposed action 3: To work with ECC to facilitate the provision of new cycle/pedestrian routes and cycle storage, and promote the routes available.

Proposed action 4: To increase cycle storage on UDC land in Saffron Walden where practical to do so.

Proposed action 5: To assist ECC in working with local schools and businesses in the review and upgrading of existing travel plans or to assist individual schools or businesses develop plans and to promote those plans

Proposed action 6: To support the extension of phone signal coverage and broadband service to all parts of the district and enable improved access to superfast broadband.

2.3 Traffic Management

Queuing traffic has been identified as the predominant reason why the objective for NO₂ is not being met at some junctions in the town centre. The primary means of lowering NO₂ emissions within the AQMA will therefore be through management of traffic flow to relieve congestion at key junctions. Traffic management is a function of ECC as highway authority.

In 2012, ECC commissioned consultants Jacobs[6] to undertake a Nitrogen Dioxide Dispersion Modelling Report for which modelling of air quality was carried out to assess the effects of the then emerging UDC Local Plan developments on NO₂ concentrations at four key junctions within the town. The modelled NO₂ levels were adjusted to correct them against measured levels following a method set out in Defra Technical Guidance TG(09)[7], and for future predictions a further adjustment was undertaken for Long Term air quality trends (LTT) to take account of emissions not decreasing as expected. Five scenarios of development, opening year and junction improvement mitigation were modelled and for the scenario of full Draft Local Plan development and junction improvements in 2026, using the TG(09) adjustment, no junction modelled had properties where there would be exceedances of the annual mean AQO for NO₂. The LTT adjustment predicted a number of receptors would be significantly impacted, the majority associated with the High St/George St junction. EU emission standards (Euro) [8] are set for new vehicles and as emissions improve with the introduction of Euro 6/VI* compliant vehicles, it is likely that after 2015 actual future year concentrations would be expected to fall somewhere between the calculated results for the two methods.

UDC later commissioned Essex Highways to undertake a highways impact assessment (HIA)[9] of the previous draft Local Plan site allocation proposals against highway capacity in key areas. The report found that the potential additional traffic which would result from the proposals could be

* Euro 6 standards apply to light duty vehicles and Euro VI to heavy duty vehicles

accommodated by the road network with infrastructure schemes to increase junction capacity and provision of a road linking Thaxted Road with Radwinter Road, facilitated by incremental development bounding the road.

The measures proposed to alter traffic flow at near capacity junctions and sought to avoid increases at other junctions such that exceedances of the AQO may occur.

Alterations at eleven junctions within the town were proposed, many of which reflected re-routeing of traffic created by the link road.

The impact assessment will need to be reviewed once revised housing allocations emerge, however funding for junction improvements has been secured through developer contributions from consented development as set out in Table 6 and the scope for implementation needs to be explored with ECC in the interim.

The restrictions inherent in the historical road network of Saffron Walden make it unlikely for a solution to be found which would improve the capacity of every junction. The following alterations identified in the HIA are independent of key infrastructure measures in the withdrawn Local Plan:

- One way traffic in Borough Lane (westbound)
- Northbound traffic restriction on Debden Rd from the junction with Borough Lane and Mount Pleasant Rd
- Borough Lane to Newport Rd priority
- Replacement of roundabout at Debden Rd/London Rd junction with priority junction

The latter is one of the four NO₂ hotspot junctions, and reductions to queues resulting from the altered traffic flow would be beneficial to reducing exposure to pollutants of residents close to the junction. There is limited scope for improvements to the remaining three junctions in the absence of new road space to route through traffic out of the centre of the town.

Essex Highways are due to carry out origin and destination surveys for town traffic following recently completed development to inform modelling scenarios for traffic management interventions.

In addition to the junction improvements, the scope for control of parking needs to be considered on the approaches to some junctions and on some of the main routes through the town where parking reduces the flow of traffic. One scheme which has been identified is peak hour suspension of the use of a limited number of on street parking bays along High Street southern approach, to allow traffic to feed through the junction with George Street more freely.

Adequate and clear signage to car parks, new amenities, leisure centre, food stores and Audley End station helps to reduce unnecessary mileage within

the town centre and should be considered when new development is completed or where insufficient signage is identified.

Proposed action 7: To work with ECC in carrying out further work and review to provide a scheme of measures aimed at improving junction capacity identified to be necessary as part of the new adopted Local Plan

Proposed action 8: To work with ECC to assess whether changes to junction configurations and signal controls, control of parking measures on main routes through Saffron Walden, and access in to the centre of the town by HGVs, will demonstrably reduce congestion can be identified and implemented ahead of adoption of the Local Plan, to improve traffic flow for existing traffic loads in the town centre and to mitigate against the increased traffic effects of committed development.

Proposed action 9: To support targeted enforcement of parking restrictions on main routes through the town centre

Proposed action 10: To provide good signage to car parks, new amenities, leisure centre, food stores and Audley End.

2.4 Corporate action by UDC

UDC commits to reducing its own impact on air quality due to its operational activity and from staff journeys to and from work.

UDC Travel Plan

The organisation currently has over three hundred employees, based mainly at the offices in Saffron Walden, with a number of smaller sites. The main offices are shared with partner organisations.

In 2012 a Green Travel Plan was produced with the following proposed actions:

- Achieving greater take-up of home working
- Increasing provision of flexible working arrangements
- Encouraging greater use of tele-conferencing facilities
- Increasing provision of bike rack and storage facilities to facilitate more cycling and walking
- Encourage car sharing and allocate dedicated car share bays
- Provide further Green Driving Training
- Supporting production of a green travel plan for the three UDC leisure sites operated by outside contractors

A number of human resource policies are in place which are relevant to travel choices:

- Maintaining a flexi-time system where staff are required to undertake 'core hours' but with flexibility at each end of the day for start and finish times which could facilitate car sharing
- Over 100 staff are currently enabled to work from home at any one time with the permission of their manager, to reduce the number of staff travelling to offices on a daily basis
- A cycling allowance is in place for staff and members to encourage cycling for work purposes
- A staff car share scheme is in place

More recently a salary sacrifice bike purchase scheme has been made available and an additional 6 secure, covered cycle spaces have been provided at the main offices to encourage cycle usage.

Information on individual's travel choices is made available for staff and the travel plan is promoted to new staff.

An annual audit of the measures within the travel plan will be undertaken to assess progress in achieving the stated outcomes. Staff travel surveys will be carried out every 2 years to understand the impact of travel behaviour within the organisation and inform review when setting objectives, actions and targets for the future life of the plan.

Proposed action 11: To continue to review UDC travel plan and review opportunities for a shared travel plan with partner organisations using UDC facilities within the town

UDC Fleet and buildings

UDC operates in the region of 75 fleet vehicles, many of which operate within the town. Refuse collection routes are already scheduled to avoid contributing to peak hour congestion. Lower operating costs can be achieved by switching fuels, and in the long term investment in low emission vehicles may be justified by air quality impact when procuring extra or replacement vehicles.

Opportunities to reduce air pollutant emissions from boilers in UDC owned buildings, including its general needs housing stock and sheltered housing schemes within Saffron Walden will continue to be sought by ensuring that they are energy efficient, and using renewable energy sources where practical and cost effective to do so, as part of a wider commitment under the UDC Climate Change Strategy.

Proposed action 12: To continue to pursue options to install renewable energy technologies at suitable sites within Saffron Walden, to review UDC fleet procurement and implement changes where identified as practicable, and likely emission reductions justify the capital expenditure.

2.5 Bus services

Public transport has the potential to replace a significant number of car journeys, but can be regarded as slow, inconvenient and unreliable. Also the vehicles used in rural areas tend to be older with subsequently higher emissions. Good publicity, responsive timetables and at stop real time information on arrival times where feasible can improve the image and experience of public transport. A convenient bus service needs to be maintained to amenities within or close to the town, and to connect to nearby towns and villages

Where appropriate to do so, infrastructure for bus services will be required at new residential development to enhance the service provided in the town.

A significant increase in the use of public transport would assist in reducing congestion in Saffron Walden.

Proposed action 13: to encourage ECC in their work with bus providers to provide integrated and accessible services, high quality facilities, and a frequent and reliable service linked to the rail service at Audley End. Information on public transport services will be made readily available in UDC buildings and via the website.

2.6 Raising awareness

UDC will continue to raise awareness of air quality issues, with the aim of influencing behaviour change. Information and education will be provided to the public through UDC community events and publications, focussing on

- the health impacts of emissions and relationship to reduction in respiratory conditions such as asthma from improved air quality
- promotion of health and financial benefits of sustainable travel to businesses and individuals
- encouragement to reduce short journeys within the town
- promote use of cleaner vehicles wherever possible
- choices for non-car travel and reducing car travel

Comprehensive information on air quality and the monitoring carried out by UDC is already provided on the UDC website, with a link to the national real time air pollution levels and forecasting service provided on the Defra website. The website will be updated and reviewed as necessary.

Whilst many new cars are fitted with automatic switch off in queues, buses, HGV's and taxis may be a significant source of emissions from idling vehicles. Anti-idling measures as part of licence conditions could be considered to encourage drivers to switch off engines in queues in the most congested streets where receptors are close to the road, to prevent wasted fuel use and unnecessary emissions. Appropriate signage within the town centre may be needed to support the measures.

The Roadside Vehicle Emissions (Fixed Penalty) Regulations 2002 permit Local Authorities to take action against drivers who leave their vehicle engines running unnecessarily when parked, which would be more applicable in streets where loading, unloading or waiting is taking place.

Proposed action 14: To identify opportunities to raise public awareness of air quality issues through education initiatives and publicity campaigns

Car sharing

A reduction in car use can be achieved through car sharing, where a passenger usually make a contribution towards fuel costs. It is often promoted within residential and business travel plans, however there are opportunities for the extent of sharing to be increased. It allows people to benefit from the convenience of car travel, whilst alleviating the associated problems of congestion and parking, and reduces costs of travel for individuals who participate. It also retains the usefulness of car travel for those for whom walking, cycling or public transport may not be an appropriate or viable option. Use of car sharing on just one day per week would contribute to the overall reduction of vehicle usage.

UDC already operates a scheme for sharing lifts, and is in a position to encourage other employers within the town to develop their own car sharing schemes for journeys to the workplace.

Proposed action 15: To provide advice and raise awareness of car sharing and associated database software available to employers

2.7 Low emission vehicles (LEVs)

Increasing the proportion of vehicles on the town's road network which are considered to have low emissions is central to improving local air quality. Individuals and fleet operators making the choice to switch from diesel to petrol vehicles will assist in reducing emissions. Electric, hybrid when operated in electric mode and hydrogen vehicles produce no emissions at point of use. Standards for what constitutes a LEV will evolve as technology develops.

A range of measures is likely to be needed to implement greater uptake, aimed at convenience and cost benefits.

Car parking incentives – free or discounted parking spaces could be made available for LEVs at UDC car parks, with those spaces located at the areas closest to the town centre. Provision would require enforcement and clear signage, and the reduced revenue would need to be balanced against the public health costs of poor air quality.

Proposed action 16: To consider the provision of preferential charging for UDC controlled parking spaces for vehicles meeting low emission standards.

Taxi fleet: Taxis provide an important flexible means of transport within the town. The relatively large proportion of short journeys over a small area of the town makes taxis well suited to choosing plug in or hybrid vehicles. With the high mileage driven, the potential running cost savings could be a significant benefit. Taxis are also well placed to increase awareness amongst the public of this type of vehicle.

Those taxis which are not low emission can be subject to limits on the age of the vehicle licensable, to encourage continual improvement in emissions. Vehicles which are newer than 8 years old should emit 50% less NOx and particulates than older vehicles.

Taxi operators can be incentivised to use LEVs by introducing reduced licence fees and providing a charging point at the town centre rank.

Proposed action 17: To engage with the Uttlesford licensed operators' forum with the aim of introducing emission controls for licensed taxis operating within Saffron Walden

Bus fleet: Emissions from buses are estimated to be contributing 12% of NO₂ emissions in the town and measures to ensure emissions are as low as possible from the existing fleet should be considered. Standards can be set for minimum Euro engine designation for existing and newly introduced vehicles accessing the town centre. Buses operated under contracts procured by ECC should be included. Support for retrofit projects and bids through cleaner bus funding should be considered.

Proposed action 18: To encourage ECC to set emission standards for new and existing buses under contract operating within the town.

Fleet LEVs – Aside from the UDC fleet, support could be made available to businesses and other public authorities to switch to LE fleet vehicles in terms of signposting and provision of information.

Proposed action 19: To work with operators of fleet vehicles within the town to facilitate the introduction of low emission vehicles

Infrastructure - Convenience of use of LEVs can be facilitated through provision of charging points at UDC owned car parking spaces, and requiring points on new developments through the planning regime. Currently there are two points at the UDC owned Lord Butler Leisure centre on Peaslands Road.

Proposed action 20: Extended provision of fast charge electric charging points on UDC owned parking spaces in the town.

2.8 Heavy goods vehicles

HGVs are estimated to be contributing 24% of NO₂ emissions in the town, and measures to control movements through the town in peak periods would be beneficial in reducing emissions and congestion. The transport assessment submitted with the consented planning application to redevelop the Ridgeons site on Ashdon Road predicted a reduction in HGV movements of up to 10% at the four junctions under consideration. Opportunities exist when consent is granted for commercial development to require associated fleet and freight vehicles to be ultra-low emission. Aside from the impact of HGV's travelling through the town, parking of HGVs on the both approaches to the High Street junction for deliveries can be cause of congestion notably in peak periods.

Consideration should be given to timing commercial deliveries to High Street premises outside of peak travel times. The measure will require working with local businesses and enforcement of restrictions with the help of conventional signage. A useful forum to discuss the issue may be a regional freight transport group.

Proposed action 21: To work with ECC on introducing delivery time restrictions to High Street Saffron Walden.

2.9 Monitoring

Further monitoring of NO₂ will inform the need to define further action and assist with monitoring progress of approved action. At present monitoring by use of diffusion tubes is carried out on the northern section of the High Street where receptors are generally closer to the kerbside. Initially further monitoring may be needed on the southern approach, close to the junction, to provide a better picture of levels associated with the junction. The outcome will assist with reviewing the need to extend monitoring to further sites within the AQMA.

Proposed action 22: To carry out additional monitoring of NO₂ on the southern approach to High St/ George St junction.

3. Outcomes and timescales

The proposed actions are set out in the table below, detailing the action required, the outcome and how it will be measured, who is responsible and an estimation of the cost, the timescale for implementation and the likely contribution towards reduction of nitrogen dioxide levels if implemented fully.

The timescales for implementation, air quality impact (scale of reduction in emissions, and cost, have been assessed based on the following bandings:

Timescale banding	Timescale period
Long term (LT)	More than 6 years (after 2021)
Medium term (M)	3-5 years (2018-2020)
Short term (S)	1-2 years (2016-2017)

Air quality impact banding	Definition
High (H)	Impact is considered significant and the action is considered necessary to ensure the objective is met. Reduction of more than 1.5 µg/m ³ possible.
Medium (M)	Impact is considered important with benefits clearly seen. Reduction of 0.2 – 1.5 µg/m ³ possible.
Low (L)	Impact is small and localised and will be beneficial as part of wider measures Reduction of less than 0.2 µg/m ³

Cost banding	Description
High (H)	Significant funding required, likely to be in excess of £200k
Medium (M)	Additional funding required, £50k to £200k
Low (L)	Can be met within existing budget or would be less than £50k

Table 2: Action plan measures proposed

No	Measure	Lead responsibility	Outcome indicator	Timescale H/M/L	Target emissions impact H/M/L	Cost H/M/L
1	To develop new policies where needed or transfer existing policies to the new local plan which will seek to minimise the impact of air quality on the health of local communities and the environment	UDC	Policies contained in the adopted Local Plan by 2017	S	M	L
2	To produce a Technical Guidance document for air quality	UDC	Publicly available TG by end of 2015	S	L	L
3	To work with ECC to facilitate the provision of new cycle/pedestrian routes and cycle storage, and promote the routes available.	ECC/UDC	Number of new routes provided, increase in no of storage facilities per annum and users of facilities year on year	S-M	L	H
4	UDC to increase cycle storage on its own land in the town where practical to do so.	UDC	Increase in no of storage facilities and users of facilities	S	L	L
5	To assist ECC in working with local schools and businesses in the review and upgrading of existing travel plans or to assist individual schools or businesses develop plans and to promote those plans	ECC/UDC	Number of travel plans upgraded, no. of schools and businesses newer than 2015. Reduction in school run and commuter traffic of 5 -10% Number of pupils walking or cycling to school.	M	L	L
6	To support the extension of phone signal coverage and broadband service to all parts of the district and enable improved superfast broadband.	UDC/ECC	Number of businesses and homes enabled to access superfast broadband by 2019. Increase in no of people regularly working from home	S	L	L
7	To work with ECC	ECC	Junction capacity	LT	H	H

	Highways to carry out further work and review to provide a scheme of measures aimed at improving junction capacity within the AQMA identified to be necessary as part of the new draft Local Plan		improvements at the four key junctions identified in the plan Reduction in queue lengths from identified baseline.			
8	To work with ECC to assess whether changes to junction configurations and signal controls, control of parking measures on main routes through the town and access by HGVs which will demonstrably reduce congestion can be implemented ahead of adoption of the local plan	ECC	Improvements to junctions carried out, improved parking on main routes, restrictions to HGVs. Reduction in queue lengths	S	M	H
9	To support targeted enforcement of parking restrictions on main routes through the town centre	UDC	No of parking penalty notices issued	S	L	L
10	To provide good signage to car parks, new amenities, leisure centre, food stores and Audley End .	UDC	No of new signs provided	S	L	L
11	To review UDC travel plan and review opportunities for a shared travel plan with partner organisations using UDC facilities	UDC	Reviewed UDC travel plan, shared travel plan by end of 2016. Reduction in car travel to work as measured by occupied car spaces and surveys, reduction in business mileage of 5% pa	S	L	L
12	To pursue options to install renewable energy technologies at suitable sites within the town, to review UDC fleet and building emissions and implement changes where	UDC	No kW renewable energy within SW, review of fuel usage and type, no of UDC LEVs	S	L	M

	identified as practicable					
13	To support ECC in their work with bus service providers to provide integrated and accessible services, high quality facilities, and a frequent and reliable service linked to the rail service at Audley End. Information on Public Transport services to be readily available in UDC buildings and via the website.	UDC/ECC	No of new or improved services available, information available in UDC buildings. Increase in bus usage of 5%	S	L	L
14	To identify opportunities to raise public awareness of air quality issues through education initiatives and publicity campaigns	UDC	No of campaigns, target one per annum.	S	L	L
15	To provide advice and raise awareness of car sharing and associated database software available to employers	UDC	No of new car sharing schemes set up, target one per annum. Reduction of 1-5% of private car commuter journeys	S	L	L
16	To consider the provision of preferential charging for UDC controlled parking spaces for vehicles meeting low emission standards	UDC	Review of charging policy	S	L	L
17	To engage with the Uttlesford licensed operators' forum with the aim of introducing emission controls for licensed taxis operating within the town.	UDC	Review of licensing policy	S	L	L
18	To encourage ECC to set standards for new and existing buses under contract operating within the town	ECC	Review of contractual arrangements	S	L	L

19	To work with the operators of fleet vehicles within the town to facilitate the introduction of low emission vehicles	UDC	No of LEV fleet vehicles on town road network	M	M	M
20	Extended provision of electric charging points on UDC owned parking spaces in the town	UDC	No of points installed pa, target 4	M	L	M
21	To work with ECC on introducing delivery time restrictions to Saffron Walden High Street	ECC	Restrictions in place, reductions in HGV parking	S	L	L
21	To carry out additional monitoring of NO2 on the southern approach to HighSt/George St junction	UDC		S	L	L

Some actions will be long term and ongoing, others can be carried out more quickly, and milestones set for each will enable progress to be monitored and assessed. Some will be more challenging than others to implement either due to resource issues or support from various outside organisations.

Whilst UDC is the authority ultimately responsible for managing air quality, it will not always be the organisation holding the resources or having legislative power to directly implement the action. In these cases it is important to have good working relationships and clear communications with the appropriate organisations to ensure a focus is kept on the implementation of the actions.

This is especially true regarding the local highway network, although UDC can secure improvements to it through the planning process and developers contributions, ECC are the key resource holders and decision makers on highway schemes.

It should be noted that costs, timescales and air quality benefit will be specific to the local circumstances and final scheme design to be implemented thus it is very difficult to accurately predict figures without specific detail. The anticipated values applied are estimates based on available information and experience.

Cost benefit analysis and prioritisation will be undertaken at a later stage following further consideration and research into costs.

It is unlikely that adopting a single particular action will result in the desired reductions in NO₂ levels in the AQMA and a range of options will be required to effect measurable air quality improvements.

4. Consultation

A consultation process with all interested parties and agencies will be carried out to ensure the proposed actions set out in the draft plan are supported by all who respond.

At the end of the consultation process, the views and suggestions received will be reflected in preparing the final Air Quality Action Plan for adoption by UDC within 6 months of the publication of the draft.

Those measures considered but not pursued will be identified and the reasons set out.

The following stakeholders will be consulted on the draft plan:

- Secretary of State (Defra)
- Essex County Council Highways and Transportation Dept
- Environment Agency
- Uttlesford Transport Forum
- Essex Health & Well Being board
- Public Health Essex
- LSP (Uttlesford Futures)
- Saffron Walden Chamber of Trade
- Saffron Walden Town Council
- Residents within or affected by the AQMA
- Uttlesford Licensed vehicle operators forum
- Local schools
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Citizens Panel
- Access Walden

The consultation period will run for 10 weeks, and may comprise of the following communications:

- Direct correspondence to the interested parties
- Inclusion in UDC community publications, website, community events
- Press release to notify residents of the consultation phase

5. Progress monitoring and review

A programme of monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the measures adopted will be undertaken once an action plan has been adopted. The programme will include the outcome indicators set out in table 7.

External factors will affect the delivery and resulting impact of the measures proposed, and it is recognised that action will change and evolve and the plan will be updated and reviewed as necessary.

Once the final plan is adopted, opportunities to secure external funding to support the measures within the plan will be sought.

End of Part 1

Part 2 Supporting Information

6. Importance of air quality

6.1 Impact of poor air quality

It has long been acknowledged that exposure to pollutants in the air we breathe can have a negative impact on human health and our environment, and impacts will not be confined to the AQMA. More evidence on the extent of the impact has come to light from research carried out in the past five years which has estimated the life years lost as a result of the long term effects of exposure to fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. Particulate matter (pm) is fractionated into pm₁₀ which includes all particles smaller than 10 microns (including pm_{2.5}) and pm_{2.5} comprising all particles smaller than 2.5 microns.*

In 2010 a report published by COMEAP[10] estimated 29,000 early deaths in the UK were attributable to fine particulate matter (pm_{2.5}) in the atmosphere, and a study in 2015 by Kings College London[11] assessed the effects on mortality of nitrogen dioxide levels in London independently of particulate matter, to be proportionately higher than for particulate matter alone.

Equivalent health costs of air pollution have been placed at up to £20 billion each year, and the life expectancy of every person is claimed to be reduced by an average of 7-8 months [12]

Public Health England has publicised mortality data for each local authority area[13]. In the Uttlesford district, the fraction of all cause adult deaths attributable to long term exposure to current levels of human made particulate air pollution was estimated at 5.4%, comparable to the east of England as a whole. Due to uncertainty in the modelling, the actual burden could range from one sixth to about double this figure.

The pollutant significant to the declaration of the Saffron Walden AQMA is NO₂ a large proportion of which is locally produced as a result of road traffic. Exposure to the pollutant is dependent on the time spent at locations close to the source of emissions, and residents close to the junctions where the highest levels have been observed are at the greatest risk. No incidents of the hourly mean objective being exceeded have been observed in recent years.

Levels of pm_{2.5} are also monitored in Saffron Walden although local authorities are not currently legally obliged to do so. The annual means for pm_{2.5} have been below the objective; however the UK has a target to reduce average concentrations at urban background locations by 2 µg/m³ by 2020.

*1 one micron is 1000th of a millimetre.

Following a review of studies in 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) concluded there is no evidence of safe exposure level to very fine particles or a threshold below which no adverse health effects occur. Negative health impacts have been found well below current EU & UK limits. NO₂ also was associated with adverse health effects at concentrations that were at or below the current EU limit values [14]

It is much more difficult for local action to impact on pm 2.5 pollution as a smaller proportion than other pollutants is locally derived. Control is a regional rather than local concern due to their ability to be carried large distances in the atmosphere. 50-55% of average levels have been found to be due to UK emissions, the remainder originating largely from NW Europe carried on easterly winds [15]. As a consequence proportionately higher levels are found in south east England than other areas of the UK. Defra estimate 35% of pm 2.5 at urban background locations is locally derived [16].

Whilst the action plan measures are primarily aimed at reducing the exposure of residents within the AQMA to NO₂, the initiatives within it will have a positive effect on the reduction of particulates, and other air pollutants such as ozone, which will have wider benefits for public health. The initiatives will also help to reduce the exposure of drivers to air pollutants. Studies have shown that some drivers, depending on the vehicle, are exposed to twice the level of NO₂ and four times the level of particulates than pedestrians at a given location.

The specific health effects depend on the pollutant. Short-term exposure to NO₂ can cause irritation and inflammation of the airways, leading to reduced lung function. NO₂ also contributes to the formation of secondary particles and ground level ozone, both of which are associated with cardiovascular and respiratory health effects. Fine particles (pm10) are small enough to enter the deepest part of the lungs, without being visible or smelt and the very finest can migrate from the lungs into the blood vessels. Particulate matter has been listed a Class 1 carcinogen. Children, older people and those with respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis are more susceptible than average to the effects of air pollution, and the impacts on respiration may worsen the symptoms suffered by people with heart conditions.

Air pollution also has a detrimental effect on our biodiversity, crops and water quality.

6.2 Sources of air pollutants

Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) containing nitric oxide (NO) and NO₂ are emitted during all combustion processes in air. NO subsequently reacts with ozone to produce NO₂. In the absence of significant industrial sources, the prime source of nitrogen dioxides in the town centre is high volumes of slow moving traffic. A proportion of NO₂ in the air is emitted directly from vehicle

exhaust; the remainder is formed through reaction in air following the combustion process.

Fine particle air pollutants consist of solid particles and liquid droplets, either human made or naturally occurring. They consist of chemicals formed in reaction with other pollutants in the air including NO₂ from vehicle exhausts, part burned fuel, and compounds derived from mechanical wear of engine components, the friction of tyres on the road, and from the wear of brake discs and pads. Non traffic sources include construction and industrial processes, combustion and agriculture.

7. Local air quality

7.1 Background levels of NO₂

The monitored level of NO₂ is made up of a combination of the background level and the traffic emissions at the locality. The background level is made up of generic sources of emissions such as main roads, industrial point sources and residential and commercial heating. Comparison of the monitored level with the background level shows the impact of vehicle emissions within the AQMA. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) operate a mapping database producing estimates of background emission concentrations on 1km x 1km grid square basis, related to the national network of emission monitoring. Background levels within the AQMA are monitored by the Gibson Close diffusion tube, which can be used to verify the Defra figure in the grid square relevant for Gibson Close (High Street locality) and adjust the figure for other grid squares. London Road and Thaxted Road are outside the grid square relating to Gibson Close and a value using the Defra grid square has been used as recommended in TG(09). The background levels for NO₂ are reducing gradually due to improvements in overall emissions from all sources.

Table 3 shows the background levels in 2012, as this is the year from which monitored data has been used to determine reductions needed to meet the objective.

Table 3: Background levels of NO₂ in AQMA

Grid square	Junction	Defra value 2012 ($\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$)	Monitored or adjusted value ($\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$)
553500 238500	Bridge St/Castle St	13.7	15.7
553500 237500	London Rd/Debden Rd	13.4	15.7
554500 238500	Thaxted Rd /Radwinter Rd	15.8	15.8
553500 238500	High Street/George Street	13.7	15.7

7.2 Recent trends in air quality within Saffron Walden

Reference to the monitoring data in Appendix 3 will show that levels of NO₂ have reduced slightly at some junctions over the past 2-3 years. Some fluctuation is due to the effect of weather conditions, but the trend at the automatic monitoring station in Hill Street has been for levels to remain flat.

Defra have reported from analysis of monitoring data that trends in ambient concentrations of NO₂ in the UK showed a decrease in concentration from 1996 to 2002. Thereafter, NO₂ concentrations have stabilised with little to no reduction at urban roadside and background sites between 2004 and 2013.

The reason for this is not fully understood, but it is thought to be related to the actual performance of diesel vehicles when compared with calculations based on Euro standards to regulate emissions from vehicles. Studies suggest that NO_x emissions during on road driving conditions, varied from predictions under laboratory conditions, and have not declined substantially, up to and including Euro 5 (2009).

A major factor has been the increase in proportion of cars with diesel engines, which in 2012 represented just over half of new car sales, with a trend towards large, powerful turbocharged engines which allow rapid acceleration. Diesel fuel produces four more times NO₂ and up to 30 times more pm₁₀ than petrol. Catalytic converters on diesel engines help to reduce particulate matter released but increase the ratio of nitrogen dioxides from the combustion process converted into nitrogen dioxides. The proportion of primary nitrogen dioxide emitted from vehicles, rather than nitrous oxides, has therefore increased over recent years. Another factor to consider is that catalytic converters only function once the engine is at high temperature, and will have little impact on emissions where a large proportion of the vehicles on the roads are carrying out short journeys from cold, at low speeds. Petrol engines in contrast have shown marked reductions in emissions over recent years.

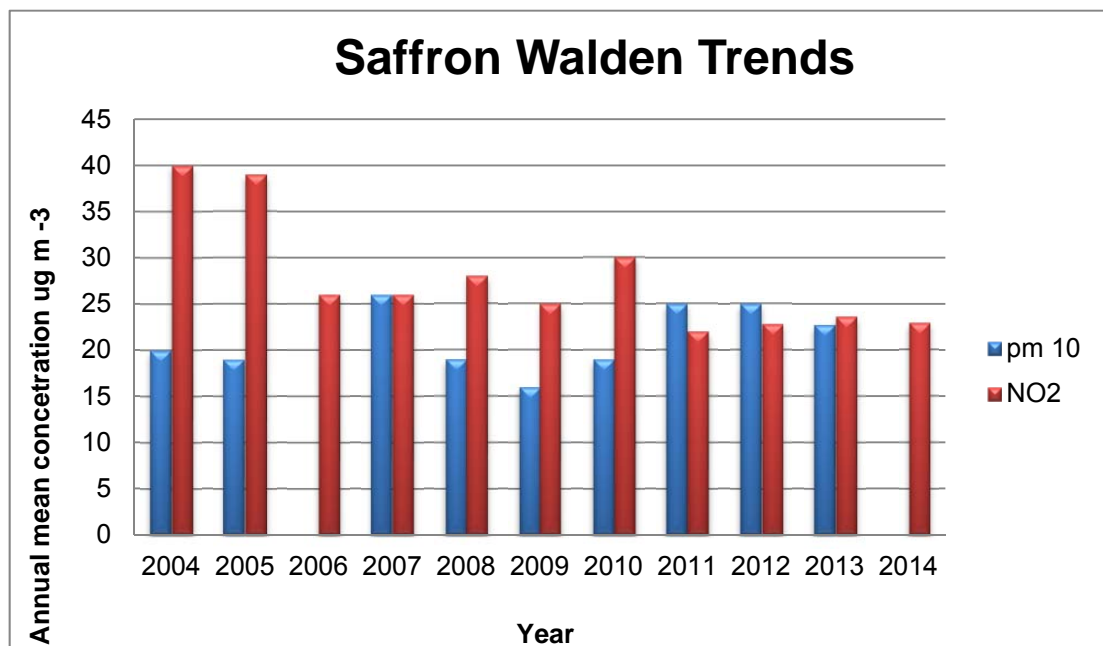
The long term trend is assumed to be level until the impact on air quality of vehicles complying with the more stringent Euro 6/VI standards from 2014

onwards becomes available. There is currently uncertainty on the predicted impact due to a lack of data from real world emission testing. A new EU testing procedure based on real rather than lab tests is being considered for introduction by 2017. As the proportion of vehicles built under the standard increases within the fleet makeup, roadside emissions are expected to improve, provided vehicles on the road incorporate and maintain the emission reduction technology available.

Figure 4 shows the trends at the monitoring station in Saffron Walden, indicating no significant reduction in concentrations of NO₂ between 2007 and 2014, consistent with conclusions of the Defra report on long term trends on NO₂. Defra have stated that 2010 was an unusually high year for NO₂.

NB: pm 10 has not been monitored in Saffron Walden since 2013.

Figure 4: Trends in emissions in Saffron Walden based on Hill Street automatic monitor



As a rural area, car ownership and use within Uttlesford is relatively high[17] Fewer households in Uttlesford do not own a vehicle than any other Essex district, and more households own 2,3,or 4 than any other Essex district. Saffron Walden is located in a relatively affluent area compared to the UK as a whole, and the introduction of new vehicles meeting Euro 6 standards can be expected to be at a greater rate than the national average. However the growth of Saffron Walden and surrounding areas will lead to increased traffic using local roads, and improvements in emission quality of new vehicles may be insufficient to mitigate against increases in the levels of harmful pollutants emitted by the overall traffic fleet.

7.3 Level of reduction needed

Estimating the level of reduction in emissions to meet the NO₂ objective has to be based on levels of NO_x, as this is the primary emissions source from vehicle exhausts. A method for calculating the reduction in road NO_x is set out in TG(09) and uses the background concentrations of NO₂ and NO_x for the year of interest, the monitored levels and the distances of the tube and the receptor from the kerb. The receptor is taken as the nearest façade of a residential property.

The level of reduction has been based on the latest year when the tubes showed the greatest exceedances of the objective at the four junctions of concern, which was 2012. In 2013 two recorded exceedances and two were within 10% of the objective which is the tolerable margin of error. In 2014 two were within 10% of the objective and there were no exceedances. The drivers of growth in traffic within Saffron Walden are the consented but not yet completed developments as set out later in the report, and any others that will come forward as part of the revised local plan. In view of the possibility that emission levels may increase in the near future as a result of traffic growth, measures need to be in place to ensure any increase is minimised.

Reductions in emissions at the junctions to the scale shown in Table 4 will be needed, based on 2012 monitoring and background levels. Note tube UT001 recorded levels within 10% less than the objective, TG(09) requires the objective level of 40 at the nearest receptor to be used in the calculation, therefore no reduction has been input.

Table 4: Reduction in NO_x needed

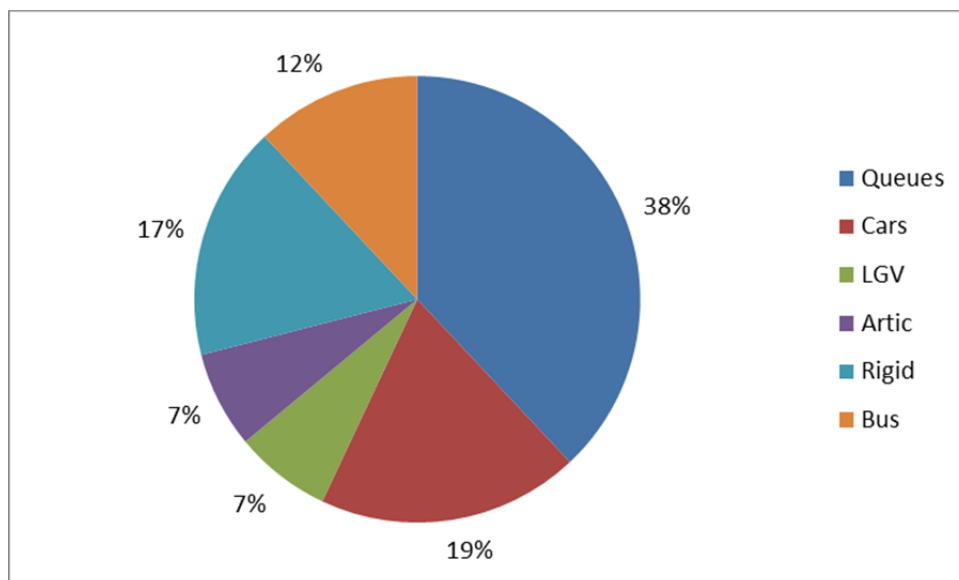
Tube	Junction	Road NO _x	Measured NO ₂	Reduction in NO _x
UT004	Bridge St/Castle St	66.5	47.5	17%
UT028	Debden Road/London Road	69.4	45.9	14%
UT005	Thaxted Road/Radwinter Road	56.3	46.1	3%
UT001	High Street/ George Street	-	38.7	-

7.4 Source apportionment

Apportionment of the contribution from various sources of NO₂ can be indicative only, as concentrations include contributions from both directly emitted NO₂ and secondary NO₂ formed in the atmosphere by oxidation of NO. The relationship is not linear and is complicated by variations from one location to another and background levels at the location. Primary emissions are influenced by the local fleet composition including fuel type and age of vehicle, and traffic conditions at each junction. .

However, following on from the UDC Action Plan of 2009, ECC commissioned Mouchel Ltd [18] to investigate air quality in baseline conditions and possible transport improvements required in Saffron Walden as part of future action planning. The report included source apportionment work which had been undertaken at the High Street junction with George Street. The results were considered to be illustrative of a wider area and determined that NO₂ emissions from HGVs contribute 24%, light goods vehicles 7%, buses 12% and cars 19%. 38% of emissions were found to be due to queuing traffic at the junction. The figures indicate the disproportionate impact of buses and HGV's on emissions. From traffic surveys submitted with planning applications, buses and HGV's make up just 3% of the fleet and on some routes less. An increase in either would have a more significant impact on emissions than an increase in cars on the roads.

Figure 5: Source apportionment



Appendices

A.1 Action Plan 2009

The following measures were approved by UDC to address exceedances of the NO₂ objective in the three small AQMAs which have subsequently been revoked:

- School travel plans
- Business travel plans
- Improving public transport
- Junction improvements at the three junctions on which the AQMAs were centred
- Signage to car parks
- Development of a Sustainable Distribution Strategy to address movements of HGVs

Table 5: 2009 Actions

2009 Measure	Progress 2011	Progress 2013
School travel plans	School travel team at ECC disbanded	
Business travel plans	UDC travel plan being developed	UDC travel plan implemented, additional cycle storage
Improving public transport and non-car travel	Improvements at Audley End Station to enhance bus service. Proposal for cycle path to station.	Cycle/pedestrian path under design by ECC
Junction improvements to ease congestion	Air quality model commissioned by ECC, sec 106 funding secured for congestion reducing schemes	Highway impact assessment of draft Local Plan proposals, outcome dependant on adoption of LP
Signage to car parks	No progress	New signage provided, further signage as new developments completed
Sustainable distribution strategy to address movements of HGVs	No progress	Vehicle activated sign on weight limit road entry to town from north

A.2 Legislative Framework

The Environment Act (1995) requires UK government to produce a national Air Quality Strategy (AQS)[19] the most recent of which was published in 2007, and which contains standards based on EU limits for levels of major air pollutants related to concentrations of the pollutant at or below which risks to public health would be exceedingly small.

The standards are the subject of regulations [20] which set out Air Quality Objectives (AQOs), effectively policy targets of maximum ambient pollutant concentrations that are not to be exceeded either without exception or with a permitted number of exceedances over a specified timescale, and a date by which they should be achieved and maintained thereafter.

Local Authorities (LAs) are required to periodically review and assess air quality within their area of jurisdiction under a system of Local Air Quality Management (LAQM). This process involves considering present and likely future air quality against the objectives. If it is predicted that levels at sensitive locations where members of the public are regularly present for the relevant averaging period are likely to be exceeded, the LA is required to declare an AQMA and develop an action plan to tackle the problems.

The review and assessment requires the production of reports on annual progress, updating and screening assessments every three years, and detailed assessment of areas where breaches of the objectives are likely to occur. The pollutant types and thresholds are identified in Table 1. It is the exceedances of the annual mean UK objective for NO₂ close to some junctions which has led to the Saffron Walden AQMA being declared.

The objectives only apply where members of the public are likely to be regularly present for the averaging time of the objective. The annual mean objectives apply to all locations where the public may be regularly exposed including the building facades of residential properties. The 1 hour mean objective applies to all locations where the public may be likely to stay for 1 hour or more such as a shopping street, and measurements have shown that it is unlikely to be exceeded unless the annual mean NO₂ concentration is greater than 60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

Table 6: Air Quality objectives for the purpose of Local Air Quality Management in England.

Pollutant	Limit Value	Measured as	Date to be achieved by and maintained thereafter
Benzene	5.00 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Running annual mean	01.01.2005
Carbon monoxide	10.0 mg/m^3	Running 8-hour mean	01.01.2005
Lead	0.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	01.01.2005
Nitrogen Dioxide	200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	01.01.2010
	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	01.01.2010
Particles (PM₁₀) (gravimetric)	50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24-hour mean	01.01.2005
	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	01.01.2005
Sulphur dioxide	350 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1-hour mean	01.01.2005
	125 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24-hour mean	01.01.2005

Other objectives

Pollutant	Target	Measured as
Pm 2.5	25 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 2020	Annual mean
Ozone	100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ not more than 25 annual exceedances	Daily 8hr mean

UK Government obtained an extension for meeting the EU legally binding air quality limit value for NO₂, the same value as the objective, to 2015, and has found meeting the limit challenging in most regions of the UK, as the largest source of this pollutant is road transport. The European Commission has formally launched infringement proceedings with a requirement to produce a new national action plan. Defra is seeking to work with Local Authorities and recognises the important part which local action plays in meeting the limit. However, it should be noted that discretionary power in Part 2 of the Localism Act 2011 enables the Government to require responsible authorities to pay all or part of an infringement fine.

A 3: SW Nitrogen Dioxide Diffusion Tube & monitor data 2007-2014

Site ID	Location	Annual Mean Concentrations ($\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$) Tubes data adjusted for Bias							
		2007 (Bias Factor 0.89)	2008 (Bias Factor 1.36)	2009 (Bias Factor 0.92)	2010 (Bias Factor 0.95)	2011 (Bias Factor 0.80)	2012 (Bias Factor 0.90)	2013 (Bias Factor 0.97)	2014 (Bias Factor 0.87)
UT001	PO High Street	37.1	42.9	40	47.22	36.6	38.67	38.9	33.1
UT003	Gibson Gardens (BG)	16.0	17.9	18	20.29	14.1	15.74	16	13.7
UT004	YHA Bridge St	36.2	45.2	44	48.61	38.4	47.51	42.7	37.3
UT005	Thaxted Road/East St	42.9	53.4	50	57.66	43.1	46.08	36.2	38.6
UT011	33 High Street	34.6	37.1	37	41.53	30.7	33.57	34.4	30.6
UT012	Town Hall Market Sq	27.6	25.0	22	25.41	18.2	21.14	21	19
UT013,14/2 7 mean	Fire Station Hill Street	-	-	25	29.10	21.2	22.68	25	22.1
UT028	London Road	-	47.7	43	50.00	40.7	45.87	41.3	35
UT029	Debden Road	-	-	-	32.75	23.0	30.02	27.3	25
UT030	Friends School	-	-	-	36.95	25.3	26.91	30.7	27.2
UT031	Peaslands Rd							23.8	22
UT032	Borough Lane							19.5	16.9
UT036	Church Street								20.8
UT037	Castle Street								24.1
Monitoring station	Fire station Hill Street	25.7	27.7	24.7	30	22.3	22.9	23.7	22.9

NB. Exceedances are shown in bold

References

- [1] Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance, Defra 2009
- [2] National Planning Policy Framework (2012), DCLG.
- [3] National Planning Practice Guidance DCLG
- [4] Essex Transport Strategy, Essex County Council, June 2011
- [5] Essex Highways, Uttlesford Cycle Strategy, October 2014
- [6] Assessment of Uttlesford District's Local Plan on Air Quality in Saffron Walden Nitrogen dioxide dispersion modelling report. Jacobs October 2013
- [7] Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance, Defra 2009
- [8] Emission standards defined in a series of EU directives
- [9] Uttlesford Draft Local Plan: Highway Impact Assessment of Draft Local Plan to 2031 Essex Highways March 2014
- [10] The mortality effects on long term exposure to particulate air pollution in the United Kingdom COMEAP 2010
- [11] Understanding the health impacts for air pollution in London Kings College 2015
- [12] House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee Action on Air Quality November 2014
- [13] Public Health Outcomes Framework data tool 2013
- [14] Estimating Local Mortality Burdens associated with particulate air pollution Public Health England, April 2014
- [15] Air Quality Expert Group: mitigation of UK pm 2.5 concentrations, 2013
- [16] Public Health Impacts and Local Action, Defra 2013
- [17] Census 2011
- [18] Air Quality Dispersion Modelling of Saffron Walden AQMAs, Mouchel 2011
- [19] Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and NI, Defra 2007
- [20] Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010) HMSO

Glossary

AQAP	Air quality action plan
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
AQO	Air Quality Objective
COMEAP	Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
ECC	Essex County Council
LAQM	Local Air Quality Management
LEV	Low emission vehicle
NO	Nitric oxide
NO ₂	Nitrogen dioxide
NO _x	Nitrogen oxides

**Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER**

**Telephone: 01799 510510
Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk
Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk**

