



Paul O'Donoghue  
Fylde Council  
St Annes Road West  
LYTHAM ST ANNES  
FY8 1LW

Please ask for: Steven Brown  
Telephone: 01772 866804  
Email: [stevenbrown@lancsfireandrescue.org.uk](mailto:stevenbrown@lancsfireandrescue.org.uk)  
Your Ref: P O'Donoghue  
Our Ref: SB/JLW  
Date: 22 December 2023

FOA Paul Swindells

Dear Paul

**FYLDE BOROUGH COUNCIL – COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024/25 - CONSULTATION WITH MAJOR PRECEPTORS ON THE DESIGN OF THE LOCAL SCHEME**

Further to your letter dated 12 December 2023, I support the Members of Fylde Council in ensuring that the scheme awards relief towards Council Tax that is payable by the applicants who are suffering financial hardship. I also support incentives for owners of long-term empty homes and second homes to bring their properties back into use.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S Brown".

Steven Brown  
Director of Corporate Services

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**Headquarters**

Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service  
Garstang Road, Fulwood  
Preston  
PR2 3LH





Paul Swindells  
Paul O'Donoghue

Phone: 01772 535259  
Fax:  
Email: Steve.freeman@lancashire-  
pcc.gov.uk  
Your ref: P O'Donoghue  
Our ref: SF  
Date: 5 January 2024

BY EMAIL

Dear Paul

**Fylde Borough Council - Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25 – Consultation with major preceptors on the design of the local scheme.**

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Thank you for your letter consulting the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire on the approach that Fylde Borough Council intends to adopt in continuing its scheme for Council Tax Support from April next year. We very much welcome the opportunity to provide our views on the proposals.

It remains the strong view of the Commissioner that the proposed scheme for council tax support must:

- Be affordable in terms of grant received, revenue loss and costs to operate
- Be as fair as possible
- Be transparent, understandable to customers and practical to operate;
- Be feasible to administer within the constraints of the timescales and available software;
- Be simple in design, avoiding unnecessary complexity;
- Avoid the costs and risks associated with collecting additional data.

In respect of your scheme for 2024/25 the Commissioner agrees that the proposed approach is appropriate as it offers protection to the most vulnerable individuals as identified within the existing Council Tax system and offers no additional costs to the Billing and Precepting authorities.

In response to your specific consultation questions please see the following:

1. Do you agree or disagree that the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme should be based on the existing rules with the final award made to a working age claimant being reduced so that the maximum reduction in the level of support is between 20% - 25%? (note: the maximum reduction in the level of support under the scheme for 2023/24 is 22.7%).

*Agree*



2. Do you agree or disagree that the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme should remain the same as the scheme in operation for 2023/24?

*Agree*

3. Do you have any suggested changes to the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme?

*None*

4. Hardship Fund – Please provide your views on the proposal to continued operation of a Hardship Fund alongside the CTRS scheme to provide support in exceptional circumstances to the most vulnerable claimants.

*We agree this arrangement should remain in place*

5. Hardship Fund – Please provide your views on the inclusion of a hardship fund as an additional discretionary award which may also be granted in accordance with S13A (1) (a) or S13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

*We agree this should be in place provided decision making on such awards is the responsibility of elected members*

6. Do you have any other comments to make about the proposed 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme?

*None*

We thank you for the opportunity to take part in the consultation and are happy to discuss any of the responses we have provided with you further.

Yours sincerely

Steve Freeman

Chief Finance Officer

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire

Mr P O'Donoghue  
Chief Financial Officer  
Fylde Borough Council  
Town Hall  
LYTHAM ST ANNES  
Lancashire



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Your ref P O'Donoghue  
Our ref NK  
Date: 28<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Paul

### **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME CONSULTATION 2024/25**

Thank you for your letter of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 consulting Lancashire County Council on the approach that Fylde Borough Council intends to adopt in continuing its scheme for Council Tax Support. We very much welcome the opportunity to provide our views on the proposals.

It remains the strong view of Lancashire County Council that the proposed scheme for Council Tax Support must:

- Be affordable in terms of grant received, revenue loss and costs to operate;
- Be as fair as possible;
- Be transparent, understandable to customers and practical to operate;
- Be feasible to implement within the constraints of the timescales and available software;
- Be simple in design, avoiding unnecessary complexity;
- Avoid the costs and risks associated with collecting additional data.

In response to your questions, I would submit the following:

1. Do you agree or disagree that the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme should be based on the existing rules with the final award made to a working age claimant being reduced so that the maximum reduction in the level of support is between 20% - 25%? (note: the maximum reduction in the level of support under the scheme for 2023/24 is 22.7%).

*We agree that the existing rules should continue and that the maximum reduction in support should remain between 20%-25%.*

Continued .....

**Neil Kissock**  
**Director of Finance**  
County Hall, PO Box 100, Preston, Lancashire PR1 0LD  
DX 710928 PRESTON COUNTY HALL

2. Do you agree or disagree that the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme should remain the same as the scheme in operation for 2023/24?

*We agree that the 2024/25 scheme should remain the same as the scheme in operation for 2023/24.*

3. Do you have any suggested changes to the 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme?

*None*

4. Hardship Fund – Please provide your views on the proposal to continued operation of a Hardship Fund alongside the CTRS scheme to provide support in exceptional circumstances to the most vulnerable claimants.

*We agree with the continued operation of the Hardship Fund to provide support in exceptional circumstances.*

5. Hardship Fund – Please provide your views on the inclusion of a hardship fund as an additional discretionary award which may also be granted in accordance with S13A (1) (a) or S13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

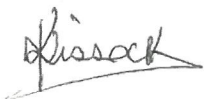
*We do not object to the additional discretionary award. However, we feel that it is fair and appropriate that Fylde Borough Council should maintain a cost neutral scheme. At a time when resources are extremely limited, it is vital that the operation of the scheme does not pass on additional costs to precepting authorities.*

6. Do you have any other comments to make about the proposed 2024/25 Fylde Council Tax Reduction Scheme?

*We have no further comments to make about the proposed scheme.*

We thank you for the opportunity to take part in the consultation and are happy to discuss our response with you further should you wish.

Yours sincerely



Neil Kissock  
Director of Finance