Before we make any decisions we would like to know your views. Please indicate below which of the three options you would prefer.

☐ Option 1: Maximum of 75% of council tax support available
☐ Option 2: Maximum of 80% of council tax support available
☐ Option 3: Maximum of 91.5% of council tax support available

Please use this space to tell us why you reached the decision you did. (Attach further pages if required.)

For further information about these options, or to complete this form online, please visit our website at www.wellingborough.gov.uk

If you want to discuss these proposals please email benefits@wellingborough.gov.uk or call us on 01933 229 777.

You can post your response back to us at Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough NN8 1BP, or you can bring it into our receptions at either Swanspool House or Tithe Barn Road.

Council tax support scheme consultation 2014-15

The help that working-age people get to pay their council tax bills is likely to change from next year.

These changes could affect every resident in the borough, not just those that receive council tax support. The changes could affect the services that residents get for their council tax.

We need to ask for people’s views about the changes before any final decisions are made. Please take the time to read the information in this leaflet and let us know what you think.

You have until 26 November to take part in this consultation.
The Borough Council of Wellingborough collects council tax from residents every year. This money goes towards paying for local services, such as schools, community policing, refuse collections and much more.

The council tax money, which is in the region of £35 million a year, is split three ways – the borough council receives 11% of the tax, the police receive 14%, and the county council receives 75%.

People in the borough on low incomes can receive council tax support (CTS) to help them pay their bill. Council tax support was introduced in April 2013 as a replacement for council tax benefit, and it changed the way that people could receive financial help.

The borough council had to introduce its own scheme to support people on low incomes, and meet the cost of this itself rather than having benefit payments reimbursed by the government. Funding was made available to help cover the cost, but it was around 10% less than had previously been paid out in council tax benefit.

When introducing the new scheme, the council was told that the benefit entitlement of pensioners must remain the same, meaning that any changes made to cover the shortfall in funding could only affect working-age people. An extra transitional grant was given by the government for the first year to reduce the impact and allow up to 91.5% of a claimant’s bill to be met by the council’s new support scheme.

From next April, the funding the council receives from the government to help meet the cost of the support scheme will be cut even more, and there will be no further transitional grant. This leaves a significant shortfall, which will have to be met by either:

- **Further reducing the level of support available to working-age people**, or
- **Increasing council tax or finding savings from other council budgets**.

This means that difficult decisions will have to be made about the level of support available to help those on a low income to pay their council tax from next year.

The council has come up with three possible ways to cover the additional shortfall, and these are listed below. These will only apply to working-age people.

Option one would have the least impact on general taxpayers, but the biggest impact on those who are entitled to council tax support (CTS).

Option three would have the least impact on those receiving council tax support, but the biggest impact on general tax payers as the shortfall would have to be met from other council budgets.

**Please read these options carefully before telling us which option you prefer on the form over the page.**

| Option one: a maximum of 75% of a person’s bill would be covered by CTS |
| This would mean a couple with children, living in a band A property and in receipt of income support, would have to pay £229.07 of their £916.27 council tax bill. **This equals around £4.40 a week.** |
| Option two: a maximum of 80% of a person’s bill would be covered by CTS |
| This would mean a couple with children, living in a band A property and in receipt of income support, would have to pay £183.26 of their £916.27 council tax bill. **This equals around £3.52 a week.** |
| Option three: a maximum of 91.5% of a person’s bill would be covered by CTS |
| This would mean a couple with children, living in a band A property and in receipt of income support, would have to pay £77.88 of their £916.27 council tax bill. **This equals around £1.50 a week.** |