

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy

Council Tax Support for Terminally Ill Residents1. Purpose of Report

This report recommends the establishment of a discretionary Council Tax Relief Scheme to support households facing the hardship of living with a terminally ill family member when in receipt of Local Council Tax Support. The Policy Overview Working Group assessed the proposed policy and requested the additional recommendations 3 and 4 below.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the following be approved:

1. **That the Policy to provide additional support to recipients of Local Council Tax Support who are terminally ill be implemented with effect from 1 April 2026.**
2. **Delegate to the Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services the ability to decide upon the award of Terminally Ill Discretionary Support Scheme.**
3. **The Policy Working Group work with the Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services to extend the proposed policy to support Terminally Ill residents that fall outside of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.**
4. **That the Council considers including the proposed policy within the Local Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2027.**

3. Detail

During 2024, Marie Curie, the UK's leading end of life charity, published a report that explored poverty and fuel poverty at the end of life in the UK. The report identified that in 2023, 111,000 people died in poverty, more than one in six deaths registered in England, Scotland and Wales. Within the report the charity recommended that local authorities should review council tax and discretionary support schemes to provide support to households on a low income that include someone living with a terminal illness.

There is currently no statutory council tax exemption or relief that can be awarded to residents living with a terminal illness. There is an existing statutory exemption for properties left empty by a resident living in a care or nursing home, which may remove the need for some residents with a terminal illness to be covered by any adopted discretionary scheme.

Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, provides councils with discretionary powers to reduce the amount of council tax payable for

individuals, or for specific classes of council taxpayers who find themselves in similar 'exceptional' circumstances. Where the powers detailed above are invoked, it includes the power to reduce an amount to nil. The Council has already invoked this power in establishing a 'care leavers reduction scheme' providing a reduction in council tax to those people in the district defined as care leavers. Any decision made under Section 13A(1)(c) is funded locally from the general fund and cannot be passed to other council tax preceptors through the collection fund. In this respect, any decision made must be funded by Broxtowe Borough residents and be budgeted for fully in the Councils accounts. Further details of the potential financial implications are detailed below.

The Marie Curie report focuses on those that die in poverty. It has been proposed to develop a Section 13A(1)(c) scheme that supports those in receipt of Local Council Tax Support.

The Broxtowe Borough Council Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2026/27 was approved at Cabinet on 27 November 2025. This scheme continues to provide support for working age residents that mirror the level of support offered to pension age residents from the national scheme. This allows those on a low income the possibility to receive up to 100% support towards their council tax charge. In most cases of a resident receiving a terminal diagnosis they will likely be entitled to Attendance Allowance (AA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Under the current Local Council Tax Support Schemes, administered by the Council, both AA and PIP would generally increase the amount of financial assistance being provided. However, there will be circumstances in which this does not cover 100% of the council tax charge.

The Policy and supporting Equalities Impact Assessment are included in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2** with details of the proposed scheme which will support residents that are in receipt of Local Council Tax Support, and have a member of their household with a terminal illness with a life expectancy of under twelve months, additional support through Section 13A(1)(c) up to 100% of their Council Tax charge. This proposed support will commence from 1 April 2026.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. The decision will impact upon all wards in the Borough.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

The Policy Overview Working Group assessed the proposed policy and requested the additional recommendations 3 and 4.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

As detailed in the report, any support awarded under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 is required to be funded by the billing authority, being Broxtowe Borough Council.

The exact funding requirements are difficult to quantify due to the information available to the Council. The Council has worked with Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to establish with the potential number of residents that might be affected with a terminal illness within the household. Due to the nature of the Trust, this does not align with the Borough boundary. However, it is estimated that around 1,200 people may live in the Broxtowe area who have been diagnosed as being in the last year of life. Based on the 2021 census data, Broxtowe has a population of 110,900. This means that approximately 1.1% of the local population has been diagnosed with a terminal illness with life expectancy of less than one year.

To establish an approximate cost, and therefore establish an appropriate budget, the following calculation has been made:

Category	Total	Financial Value
Households receiving Council Tax Support	6,068	
Households on Council Tax Support not receiving 100% support	1,538	
Average annual outstanding balance of those not receiving 100% Council Tax Support		£630.24
Potential Council Tax Support recipients to receive Support for Terminally Ill Residents at 1.1% of those not already receiving 100% Council Tax Support	16.92	
Estimated cost of policy to the Council (16.92 multiplied by £630.24)		£10,663
Proposed budget to accommodate contingency		£15,000

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, provides Councils with a discretionary power to reduce the amount of council tax payable by individuals and to allow a further reduction to those already benefitting from the council tax reduction scheme.

Section 13A(6) of the act allows the power under (1)(c) to reduce the amount to nil and Section 13A(7) allows the power to be exercised in relation to individual cases or by classes of properties.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

10. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

As this is a new policy an equality impact assessment is included in the appendix to this report.

12. Background Papers

Nil.