



# WELFARE AWARE

## UNDERSTANDING AND PREPARING FOR CHANGE

### COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT

#### What is Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and who is it for?

- CTB is support for people on benefits or low incomes which helps with their Council Tax bill.
- CTB is only for people who have to pay council tax (this is called being 'billable' for council tax).
- If you live in a hostel or similar you probably don't have to pay Council Tax, so this change won't affect you right now, but may when you move into your own place.
- The claimant does not usually get sent the benefit money directly; it goes straight to the local authority to help pay their Council Tax bill.

#### What happened to CTB

- From April 2013 central government handed over managing this benefit to councils.
- Local councils will each have their own CTB schemes.
- The overall amount of money that is available to pay this benefit will be reduced

#### How will this affect you?

- Some councils fully support people who need Council Tax assistance, and others ask people to pay some of the bill.
- Many people on other benefits may have to contribute toward the cost of their Council Tax.

- Because each local authority has their own scheme, the amount that people may need to contribute will differ from area to area.
- The government has decided that pensioners who would receive CTB under the old rules should continue to have their council tax bill paid in full.

#### What can you do?

Contact your council or check their website for information about local schemes.

#### Need more help?

Have a benefits 'check-up' to make sure that you are claiming the right benefits.

Talk to Citizens Advice for information on benefits, debt and money management  
Tel: 08444 111 444 (England)  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

The Money Advice Service has lots of useful tools to help with understanding benefits and managing money:  
[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

#### WHAT?

Council Tax Benefit is changing and is now managed completely by the council. There is less money available for this benefit so some people may need to pay part of their council tax bill.

#### WHEN?

Started April 2013