

Finance Committee – 19 February 2024

Questions Received from Members of the Public

Name	Question	Member(s)
<p>Aidan Cassidy, ACORN the union</p>	<p>Question:</p> <p>1. ACORN welcomes the Council's plans to extend the Long Term Empty Homes Premium as we've campaigned for. With the state of Council finances it seems reasonable to expect that this will be applied as soon as possible in 2024/25 - please can you confirm that you will be doing this? John Prendergast, ACORN Sheffield Branch Secretary</p> <p>2. Council Tax is regressive and unfair. The poorest of us pay proportionally the greatest amount. Will you commit to using the money to give lower income households exemptions or increased support in paying Council Tax, and take this opportunity to make Council Tax fair? Randeep Samra, ACORN Sheffield Treasurer</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>The Council already has a Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme which offers financial support to households on low incomes. This scheme costs c£40m per year in foregone Council Tax and is further supplemented by a Council Tax Hardship Scheme (CTHS), which provides additional support to households in receipt of CTS but still struggling to pay Council Tax. The CTS scheme currently supports over 40,000 households in the City, whilst over 3,000 households also benefit from additional support from the CTHS.</p> <p>Based on current collection rates the additional income raised by applying the LTEP to properties empty for more than 12 months would be c£1m. If we discount from that the income the Council would pay to itself in relation to Council-owned housing the figure is c£830k in real terms. It would cost around the same, once reductions in arrears are factored in, to increase the level of support on our CTS scheme from 77% to 80%. Such a change would typically reduce a single person's Council Tax liability by a further £0.62p per week and a family's liability by £0.83p per week.</p>	<p>Councillor Zahira Naz</p>

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