



Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
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8 February 2022

Dear Michael

Council tax rebate

I am writing in response to the Chancellor's announcement on 3 February of a £150 council tax rebate for households in bands A to D. I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions:

- Can you confirm that the Government will fully fund the rebate and that it does not expect any of the money to come from local councils? Can you also confirm that local councils will be compensated for the cost of administering the rebate?
- The Government says it expects the "vast majority" of people who pay by direct debit to receive the money in April and that, for households that do not pay by direct debit, councils will be ready to process their claims in April. How many Band A to D properties are estimated, in total, currently not to pay their council tax by direct debit? Also, how and when will households that do not pay by direct debit receive their rebate?
- Will households on council tax support, or those benefitting from other discounts or exemptions, receive the rebate, even if their annual council tax bill is less than £150?
- If there are any households that qualify for the rebate that do not have a bank account, how will they get the money?
- I welcome the provision of a £144 million discretionary fund to support low-income households that do not qualify for the rebate, and I note the Chancellor said in his statement that your Department would decide the best allocation formula. Have you developed this formula yet and when will you be ready to allocate the money? Will you also provide guidance to local councils on who will qualify for a share of the discretionary fund, and when can those people expect to receive their rebate?
- Where households rent their property but the landlord pays the council tax and then charges it to the household, will the landlord receive the rebate? If so, will such households receive their rebate through the discretionary fund. Will those

landlords, and others with second homes, potentially qualify for more than one rebate?

- Will households in council tax arrears receive a payment?
- What are the GDPR implications of using data obtained to collect council tax being used for the different purpose of paying grants outside the council tax system?
- What is the relevant qualifying date? Is the £150 payable to the people/person in occupation now or on 1 April or another date?
- Local councils are already preparing councils tax bills, which will go out next month. How are you supporting local government to make sure the necessary changes to bills can be made in time? Also, will local councils be expected to publicise the rebate, and if so, how?
- Pension credit is an important source of support for those pensioners struggling with fuel costs. Will all of those in receipt of pension credit receive the council tax rebate in full – and how is the Government working to ensure greater take-up of pension credit by those who are eligible?

I would be grateful for a response by Monday 21 February.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Betts', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee