

**Written response to:** BUSINESS AND TRANSFORMATION SCRUTINY PANEL

**Resolution:** That the Revenues & Benefits Operations Manager provide the Panel with details of the increase in Council Tax discounts.

**Written response from:** Revenues & Benefits Operations Manager

**Response:** In response to the question, most of the increase in the value of Council Tax discounts relates to the 4% overall increase in the Council Tax charge. From an analysis of the respective years the following points apply;

	2017/18	2018/19	Difference	% Change
Council Tax Discounts	£ 7,276,735	£ 7,690,988	£ 414,253	5.69%

Within the various categories of discounts, comparing numbers at 31<sup>st</sup> March in each collection year, most cases relate to Single Person Discounts (SPD). The movement in that category was as follows;

	2017/18	2018/19	Difference	% Change
Single Person Discounts granted	£ 6,528,490	£ 6,167,303	£361,187	5.86%
Number of Single person Discounts	19,226	18,952	274	1.45%
Council Tax Properties	52,655	52,151	504	0.96%
Single Person Discounts as a % of Council Tax Properties	36.51%	36.34%	-	0.17%

Whilst the proportional value, as a percentage of Single Person Discounts has risen, the change is marginal for that category as a proportion of the total number of council tax properties. As the property base has grown, it can be concluded that the main reason for the increase, under that discount category, is also due to the overall increase in the council tax charge.

An additional £20,000 was paid under the new category of the Care Leaver Discount in 2018/19. Other than that, I consider the movements in discounts to be within an acceptable level of change for normal fluctuations, once the council tax increase is factored in.

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019