



# Fire and Rescue Service Monthly Bulletin

**Bulletin number: 16**

**07 November 2011**

**Addressed to:**

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Chief Executive of the County Council  
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The London Commissioner  
The Chief Fire Officer**

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**[Title: Consultation on technical reforms of council tax](#)**

This item highlights the publication of the consultation on Technical reforms of council tax on 31 October 2011.

## Consultation on technical reforms of council tax

### 1. Background

- 1.1 On the 31 October 2011 the Department launched the consultation *Technical Reforms of Council Tax*. This paper discusses options in relation to the council tax liabilities of second home owners, and of the owners of empty properties, in England, including proposals which would require primary legislation.
- 1.2 These reforms of council tax are part of a wider policy of decentralisation, giving councils increased financial autonomy and a greater stake in the economic future of their local area. They support the Government's wider agenda to enable stronger, balanced economic growth across the country.
- 1.3 The consultation forms part of the Local Government Resource Review in England, which is looking at several key areas of local government finance, including local retention of business rates and localised council tax support schemes. It flows from the Review's commitment to consider what additional flexibilities local authorities should have to help keep overall council tax levels down.

### 2. Public Consultation

- 2.1 This public consultation is of interest to fire and rescue authorities as precepting authorities and fire and rescue authorities may wish to respond to it. The proposals outline discretionary powers which would enable authorities to adjust their council tax bases at a time of other changes to the local government finance system.
- 2.2 The main proposals would give billing authorities discretion to reduce or eliminate the reliefs currently available to second home owners and the owners of some empty properties. It also covers potential reforms of several details of the council tax system including modernising arrangements for payment of council tax by installments, for delivering the information to be supplied with demand notices, and the treatment of annexes to dwellings; and some broadly administrative matters.
- 2.3 This consultation seeks views on the desirability and practicability of the proposed changes. It also seeks preliminary views on issues about which Government is not yet ready to bring forward proposals.
- 2.4 The consultation closes on 29 December 2011 and can be found at:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/technicalreformcounciltax>
- 2.5 Enquiries and responses should be sent to:

Email: [counciltax.consultations@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax.consultations@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Mr. D Kelly  
 Local Government Finance Directorate  
 Department for Communities & Local Government  
 Zone 5/D2 Eland House  
 Bressenden Place  
 London SW1E 5DU.

Telephone: 0303 444 2099.

For further information please contact:

Helen Moores	Telephone	0303 444 2591
Fire & Rescue Service Finance	Email	<a href="mailto:helen.moores@communities.gsi.gov.uk">helen.moores@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>

Department for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU  
Telephone: 0303 444 0000  
Website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

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November 2011

ISBN: 978 1 4098 3221 8