

Appendix C

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Communication Campaign – Changes to CTRS scheme (for working-age claimants) in 2020/21

Background

- Brent is proposing to change its CTRS scheme (for working-age claimants) in 2020/21 (replacing the current CTS scheme).
- There will be a brand new scheme fit for the future based on a new set of principles – simplified, transparent, based on ability to pay, incentivising work, etc.
- There will be a 12-week consultation period due to the significance of the changes.
- A more detailed document on the draft scheme will be available to view / comment on if residents / stakeholders wish to see it.
- The key aspects of the proposed scheme include:
 - A banded discount scheme based on earned income (wages).
 - What income is included / disregarded. All DWP benefits will be disregarded in full. Only earnings and any other income will be taken into account.
 - Contributions from non-dependant adults in the household based on their earnings.
 - Ease of claiming / less supporting evidence required.
 - Easy to understand.
- PCG has decided to go for the “cost-neutral” option for changing the Council Tax Support scheme (cost neutral in comparison to the 18/19 expenditure). There will not be a £4.6 million cut.

Campaign objectives

1. To engage as many of the 18,000 affected residents, and other residents and stakeholders, as possible in the 12-week consultation taking place from 19/7/19 to 20/10/19.
2. To communicate what the changes will mean to those directly affected.

Key Messages

1. We are sticking to our pledge to provide support to the 27,000 Brent residents who are in receipt of Council Tax Support
2. Despite government austerity, Brent Council will not be making further cuts to the expenditure on Council Tax Support.
3. The changes are designed to make the scheme fairer and simpler given that Universal Credit has now been introduced.
4. There will be a significant number (**state number**) of people who will benefit as a result of the changes.
5. The changes will be based on people’s ability to pay.
6. Illustrations/case studies. Eg: “Residents in Band D will only be paying the price of 4 pints (2.27 litres) of milk per week more (£1.15).”

Audience

- All Brent residents in receipt of Council Tax Support – approximately 27,000, including the 4,000 disabled residents.
- Other Brent residents

Strategy

Timescale:

Phase 1: Communications on the consultation launching on 19/7/19 before the results are presented at Full Council on 25 November.

Phase 2: Communications on the launch of the changes beginning on 1 April 2020.

Tone: The tone should be clear, simple and illustrative.

Implementation timeline for phase 1

Date	Action	Who	Date completed	Cost
	Consultation portal goes live	Policy team		£0
	Email to all affected residents to include a weblink to the consultation	Leigh Wood		£0
	Separate stakeholder letter to all key stakeholders, with invitation to individual / group meetings as appropriate	Leigh Wood		
	Press release	Karen Luke		£0
	Social media	Karen Luke		
	JCDecaux boards	Advertising working with Design & KL		£1,100 for 2 weeks.
	Presentations to Z2K and CAB (and other larger organisations).	Leigh Wood		£0
	Posters in community centres, faith centres, doctor surgeries, schools.	Karen working with Design		
	Leaflets with some case studies for schools, doctor surgeries, food banks etc.	Karen working with Design		
	Brent Connects	Leigh Wood		£0
	Network Partnerships group (CAB, Age Concern).	Leigh Wood		£0
	Cllr Southwood interview with BK Times	Karen to coordinate		£0
	Member / local MP engagement	Leigh Wood		£0

Evaluation

Key metrics for the success of phase one of this campaign will include:

Number of responses from the targeted audience to the 12-week consultation.

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