

Appendix D

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, 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. Any payment from DWP for Children (such as Tax Credits and Child Benefit) or support for a disability (such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP)) will be disregarded in full.
 - Contributions from non-dependant adults in the household based on their earnings.
 - Ease of claiming / less supporting evidence required.
 - Discretionary aspect.
 - Transitional protection for those most affected by the change in Year 1.
- Decision has been made 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 27,000 affected residents 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. We are choosing to protect pensioners.
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 benefits – approximately 27,000, including the 4,000 disabled 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
	Consultation portal goes live	Policy team	19.07.19
	Letter to all affected residents to include a weblink to the consultation	Leigh Wood	09.08.19
	Members Bulletin regarding launch of campaign	Karen Luke	25.07.19
	Members Bulletin update and reminder to Members get their ward residents involved	Karen Luke	15.08.19
	Email to all affected residents	Leigh Wood	
	Text message to all affected residents	Leigh Wood	
	One page advert in Your Brent magazine	Karen Luke with Design	07.09.19
	Press release	Karen Luke	22.07.19
	Social media (Twitter and Facebook)	Karen Luke	Bi-weekly from 22.07.19
	Article in Your Brent e-news	Karen Luke with Alex Augustin	13.08.19 15.08.19
	Post on Yammer appealing to colleagues who work with clients who would be affected by the changes.	Karen Luke	06.08.19
	JCDecaux boards	Advertising working with Design & KL	10.09.19 for two weeks
	Paid-for ad on Facebook and Instagram in September	Karen Luke	

	Pull-up banners for events (x4)	Karen Luke with Design	28.08.19
	Staff members promoting consultation to clients using iPads on the mezzanine floor and ground floor customer service areas.	Leigh Wood's team	
	Presentations to Z2K and CAB (and other larger organisations).	Leigh Wood	
	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	
	Network Partnerships group (CAB, Age Concern).	Leigh Wood	

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.