



Officer Key Decision
2 April 2025

**Report to the Corporate Director of
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration**

**Lead Cabinet Member for Climate
Action and Community Power – Cllr
Rubin**

**Authority to Enter into a Grant Agreement for Brent Council
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 4**

Wards Affected:	Willesden Green
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Name: Jakob Kupferberg Job Title: Energy Projects Manager Email: jakob.kupferberg@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report requests approval to enter into a grant agreement with Salix Finance Ltd (on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) ("Salix") for low carbon heating projects.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration:

- 2.1 Approves the Council entering into a grant agreement with Salix for low carbon heating projects in the sum £667,628.00.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The council has been successful in its application to Salix for low carbon heating projects.
- 3.2.1 Department for Energy Security and Net Zero will make funding available to enable Salix to award Brent Council with a grant of up to £667,628.00.

- 3.2.2 The purpose of the funding is to assist the Council in carrying out low carbon heating projects at two Corporate Estate sites in the Borough.
- 3.2.3 The Council confirms that the objectives of the funding are consistent with the Council's objectives and priorities, particularly when it comes to addressing the Council's own 2030 Net Zero target set out in Brent's 2022-24 Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and overall to efforts to reduce energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions for the benefit of the Council's finances and environmental footprint.
- 3.2.4 The duration of the grant is 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. It will be co-funded by the Carbon Offset Fund, with a minimum recipient contribution of £138,911.00.
- 3.2.5 The Council applied for the grant on 22nd November 2024 ahead of the 25th November deadline, was invited for a Delivery Call on 13th February 2025 and received news that it had been awarded the grant on 21st March 2025. Our Corporate Director, in consultation with Cllr Rubin, agreed to bid for the grant.
- 3.2.6 Due to the short turnaround time, Officers will require to undertake the urgency procedure under the council's constitution to ensure the agreement is signed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant application.
- 3.2.7 Deputy Director of Democratic Services has informed the Chair or the Deputy Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee or in their absence the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor in writing of the matter in respect of which the decision is to be taken and they have agreed that the taking of the decision is urgent and cannot be deferred.

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 This grant application will support the commitment in the Borough Plan's 'Greener, Cleaner Future' theme to 'lead by example by retrofitting and reducing energy usage across our estate and operations, funding projects that support the delivery of Brent pledging to do all reasonable in our gift to becoming a carbon neutral by 2030. Decarbonising the council's operations are key to ensure that we are leading by example in reducing the borough's overall territorial emission footprint.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 As part of Brent's declaration of a Climate & Ecological Emergency, the council has previously committed to developing a Net Zero Strategy for the council's own estate. Of the 885,200 tCO_{2e} produced directly within the borough of Brent (BEIS, 2022), only 0.53% of these emissions are under the direct control of the Council. However, it is important for the Council to lead by example to other communities and organisations that we are seeking to influence, and to strive to become a Net Zero Council by our target year of 2030. To date, we have achieved a 71.6% in carbon emissions from the council's own estate and

operations from a 2010-11 baseline.

- 3.2.2 The Council undertook a procurement exercise and sought quotes from 8 contractors on 9th July 2024 to commission the development of a comprehensive Heat Decarbonisation Plan (Net Zero Strategy). The project includes updating existing plans for its largest sites, creating new plans for additional buildings, and crucially; deliver the technical expertise and consultancy support required to submit an application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 4.
- 3.2.3 PSDS offers grant funding to public sector organisations to support the installation of heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures in their buildings. The primary aim of the scheme is to significantly reduce direct carbon emissions across public sector estates. On 21st March 2025 it was announced by Salix that Brent had been successful in its bid for PSDS Phase 4.
- 3.2.4 Following the successful assessment, confirmation of the grant funding has been sent to Brent Council by Salix in a Grant Offer Letter. This outlines the terms and conditions of receiving the grant value allotted to the approved project. It includes grant start and end dates and the schedules that will be used as a template for monitoring and reporting during the grant period. The council's internal governance is being followed before any formal decision is taken to enter into the grant agreement.
- 3.2.5 No grant funding can be claimed for work completed before the Grant Offer Letter is signed and returned by Brent Council. Equally, projects should be complete by the date specified in the Grant Offer Letter and no payments can be made after this date.
- 3.2.6 Applicants will be able to claim payments during the delivery of and following completion of their projects. The payments, made on a monthly cycle, will be subject to providing the required level of evidence that work has been completed.
- 3.2.7 Reporting and monitoring of grant expenditure will be undertaken by Brent's Energy Projects Manager. Day-to-day project management will be provided by Brent's Energy Projects Manager. Project governance will follow Brent's Capital Programme procedures, reporting to the Corporate Landlord Board monthly.
- 3.2.8 Officers did not consider any alternative options as this was the only grant funding that was available to apply for at the time, in order to meet the council's Net Zero targets.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Councillor Rubin, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The total estimated costs for implementing the low carbon heating projects across the two sites is £806,539 of which £806,539 are capital costs and £0 are revenue costs.
- 5.2 In order to qualify for the grant funding of £667,628 set out in paragraph 3.2 above, the council is required to match fund the sum of £138,911, plus a contingency of an additional £111,089 totalling £250,000, which was approved 22nd November 2024.
- 5.3 After carefully reviewing the Grant Offer Letter, it is assumed that Brent Council will be able to meet the grant conditions and thereby avoid the risk of any grant repayment.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 In accordance with section 9 of the table at paragraph 9.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution, submission of bids for additional resources from government and other bodies is a decision for a Corporate Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member. Officers have confirmed in Section 3 that relevant approval and consultation was obtained.
- 6.2 The Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration has delegated authority pursuant to paragraph 9.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution and Financial Regulation 8.2.2 of Part 2 of the Constitution to enter into grant funding arrangements. In doing so, the Corporate Director must ensure that the objectives of the grant agreement are consistent with the Council objectives and priorities in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.2.
- 6.3 As the Council will be an accountable body in respect of grant funding and in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.1, the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration must only exercise delegated powers to enter into grant funding arrangements where the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources approves entry into such arrangement. The Corporate Director, Finance and Resources has confirmed in the Financial Implications approval to entry into the grant agreement.
- 6.4 The Council is required to enter into a formal grant agreement. Legal Services have reviewed the grant agreement and can confirm that it is legally permissible for the Council to enter into the grant agreement.
- 6.5 The Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, is permitted pursuant to paragraph 38 (a) of Part 2 of the Access to Information Rules of the Constitution, to enter into agreements which are Key Decisions that are not included in the Forward Plan. In doing so, the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration must ensure that the procedure under the rules were followed.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the “Public Sector Equality Duty”), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
- 7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- 7.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.
- 7.5 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The project is in line with the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy delivery plans and is significant because it demonstrates that the council is leading by example in pursuit of its pledge to do all in its gift to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. It is estimated that the low carbon project works as a result of PSDS Phase 4 funding will save the council 2,708 tonnes CO2 equivalent over a lifetime.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 Not applicable.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 Not applicable.

Related Documents:

Recordable Decision for the Application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 4 for external grant funding

Report sign off:

Alice Lester

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Regeneration