	<b>Joint Committee of the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark</b> 8 July 2025
	<b>Report from the Managing Director of Shared Technology Services</b>
<b>Shared Technology Services Update</b>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	N/A
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Fabio Negro Managing Director of Shared Technology Services Email: <a href="mailto:Fabio.Negro@sharedtechnology.services">Fabio.Negro@sharedtechnology.services</a>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update on Shared Technology Services (STS).

## 2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Joint Committee is asked to:

- To note the progress taken across the various areas in the detail of the report.
- To note the changes to the Inter-Authority Agreement
- To note the Social Value report
- To note the Cyber Security Updated Report

## 3 Summary

3.1 In this reporting period (March 2025 to May 2025), SLA performance for priority 3 (P3) operational incident issues has improved by around 5% and priority 4

(P4) operational request calls SLA has been maintained within the SLAs in the main.

- 3.2 We have achieved the second lowest amount of open issues and requests for staff since the inception of the Shared Service, despite having the largest user base on record.
- 3.3 The new Customer Experience survey to gain improved feedback on customer interactions is in place. Since January 2025, we are actively acting on the feedback given.
- 3.4 We have reprocured the Telephony Service Desk with tighter service levels which started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2025.
- 3.5 Recent Audit reviews have been positive, with the lowest amount of outstanding audit actions remaining.
- 3.6 The new Procurement Act is in effect from February 2025 onwards.
- 3.7 Laptop projects are underway for Brent and the Lewisham and Southwark business cases have been approved.
- 3.8 A new 3<sup>rd</sup> party Security Operations Centre went live at the end of January 2025 for all three councils.
- 3.9 A new vulnerability management tool was purchased for laptops to give us better insights and automated deployment. Future Joint Committee Cyber Updates will contain greater detail.
- 3.10 Savings have been agreed for 2025/26, and discussions are underway in relation to further saving requirements in 2026/27.

#### **4 Service Level Performance (March - May)**

- 4.1 For the purpose of this report, we have created a section reflecting on Service Levels and broken them down into each of the areas to allow us to provide a better narrative around our performance.
- 4.2 In this reporting period (March to May 2025), SLA performance for priority 3 (P3) operational incident issues have remained the same and priority 4 (P4) operational request calls SLA have been maintained at the same level compared with the previous reporting period. This has come with a reduction in open calls, and these together show good progress in overall operational performance.

While STS engineers have worked hard to achieve this improvement, it is also acknowledged that the much-improved collaboration between STS engineers and Node4 engineers (our telephone support line providers) has played a significant role in our success. This partnership has led to streamlined

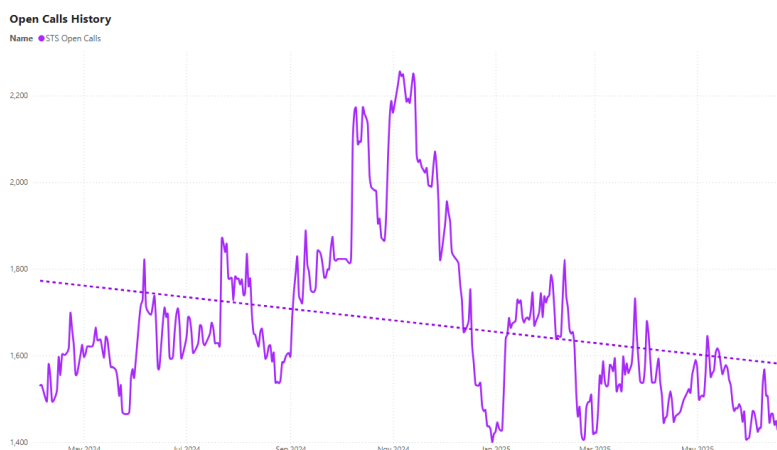
communication processes and the sharing of expertise, resulting in more efficient problem resolution.

- **Faster Resolution Times:** With increased onsite engineer headcount and better collaboration, users now experience quicker resolution of their issues, reducing downtime and frustration.
- **Improved User Satisfaction:** The proactive management of aged tickets and the reduction in open tickets have led to a noticeable improvement in user satisfaction, as their concerns are being addressed more promptly and effectively.
- **Enhanced System Performance:** The ongoing system upgrades and project requests are contributing to a more robust and reliable IT environment, which positively impacts the daily operations of all users.

4.3 The chart below illustrates the volume of open calls within the STS operational queues over the past year. We observed a peak between October and December 2024, with open tickets surpassing 2,200. Since that time, we have achieved a consistent decline, culminating in the current total of 1,465 open tickets. This marks a substantial reduction since December 2024.

The significant decline in the number of tickets can be attributed to several key factors:

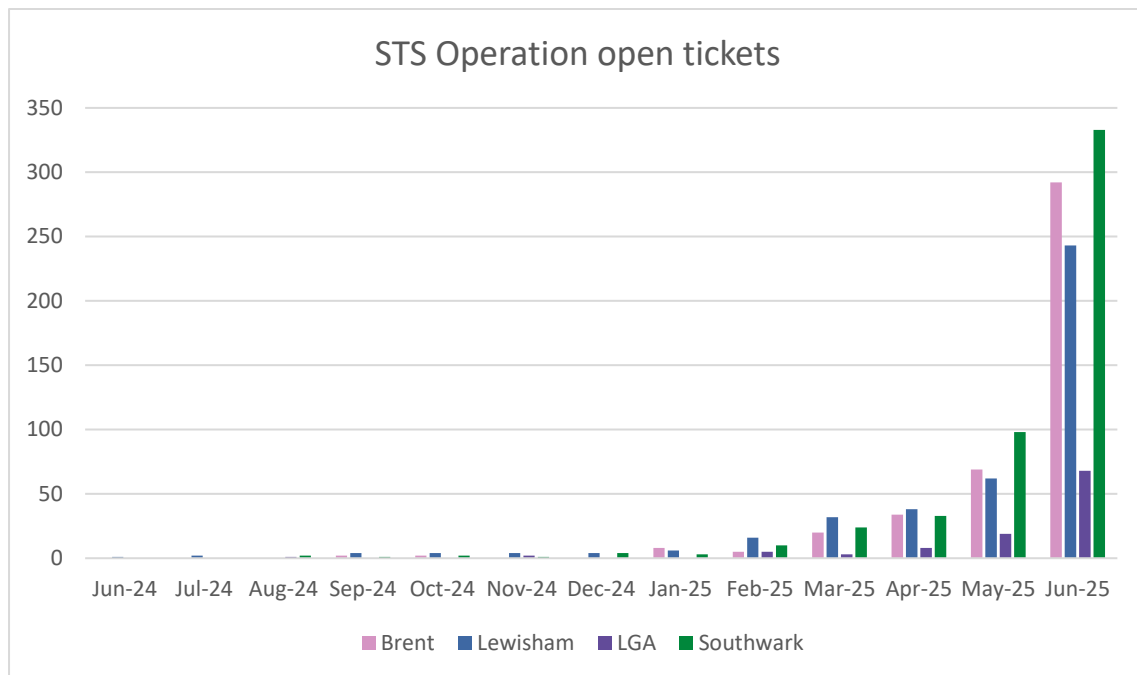
- We have made substantial improvements to our underlying infrastructure, which has led to a noticeable reduction in the occurrence of major incidents impacting our users.
- We have increased our onsite engineer headcount in Southwark, thanks to additional investment from the council. This strategic move has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of open calls in that area.
- The ongoing collaboration between STS engineers and Node4 engineers has also played a crucial role in enhancing our overall operational performance.
- There has been a significant time invested in managing the aged (older) tickets.



4.4 We continue to prioritise the resolution of aged tickets within the STS operational queues. As of now:

- There is 1 open ticket raised prior to 2024.

- The number of open tickets raised before 2025 has decreased to 63.
- The chart below provides a detailed distribution of these tickets by date. The majority of the remaining pre-2025 tickets are related to project requests that necessitate system upgrades.
- These tickets are reviewed weekly during the STS Service Delivery Board meetings held every Friday. It's noteworthy that most of the currently open tickets were raised in 2025.



4.5 We have seen a growing demand for our services with the number of tickets logged into STS queues increasing. Below you will see a graph which identifies the trends of logged tickets into STS queues over the last 3 years and into 2025. It is worth noting that the number of supported users has grown from 10,500 users in 2020 to 12,693 in 2025 (21% increase).

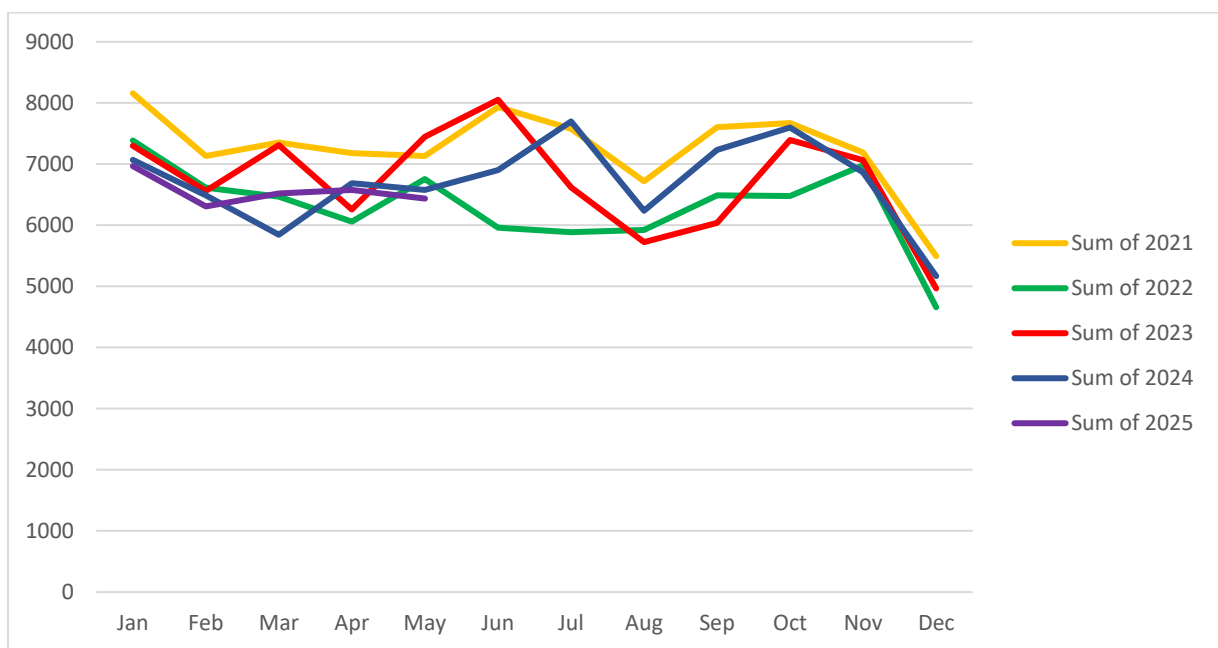
Since the beginning of 2025, we have embarked on several major initiatives that are likely to influence demand during their initial phases:

- **Windows 11 Upgrades:** Upgrading our systems to Windows 11 is essential to ensure that our IT infrastructure remains up-to-date and secure. This upgrade will bring improved security features, user-friendly interfaces, and enhanced performance, contributing to a more efficient working environment.
- **Laptop Refreshes:** We are refreshing our fleet of laptops to provide our employees with the latest technology. This initiative aims to increase productivity, reduce downtime, and improve overall user experience by providing faster and more reliable devices.
- **SD-WAN Infrastructure Project:** The SD-WAN project focuses on enhancing our network capabilities. By implementing SD-WAN, we aim to

achieve better bandwidth management, increased network speed, and improved reliability. This will support our growing user base and ensure seamless connectivity across all locations.

- **Zero Trust Network Access:** Implementing Zero Trust Network Access is a critical step in our cybersecurity strategy. This approach ensures that all users, whether inside or outside the network, are continuously verified before gaining access to resources. It significantly reduces the risk of cyber threats and ensures that our data remains secure.

These projects are critical for ensuring compliance and securing our data. Additionally, we anticipate that the upgrades will enhance user experience and performance.



#### 4.6 Priority 1 - Major Incidents

4.6.1 A Priority 1(P1) is classed as a major incident and is defined as an incident that results in the unavailability of or significant degradation to an IT service used by an entire council or councils or the unavailability or significant degradation of a service impacting upon a whole department, a significant number of users or an entire site or an unavailability or degradation of a critical (Tier 1) business application/service.

4.6.2 In reporting period (March – May 2025), there were eight P1 incidents related to STS infrastructure.

- Major incident KPI performance (>3 per month): We have not breached this KPI in the reporting period.
- P1 SLA performance: 61% (5 of 8 MI restored service within 4 hours)
- Three of the major incidents were attributed to issues with dependent services, which include third-party services beyond the control of STS.

- This is an increase of MI events on the previous reporting period Dec 2024 – Feb 2025: 3

Major Incidents		
Month	# P1	SLA
Mar-25	3	66%
Apr-25	3	66%
May-25	2	50%
Total	8	61%

4.6.3 With every major incident that occurs, STS diligently produces a comprehensive Major Incident Report. These reports detail the impact of the incident, provide timelines, conduct root cause analysis, and outline the lessons learned. The reports ensure transparency and accountability by being distributed to the affected partners, with review meetings held when appropriate or requested.

4.6.4 The complexity and severity of the P1 incidents varied, but our team worked tirelessly, following established protocols and leveraging all available resources. After stabilising each incident, we conducted thorough investigations to understand the underlying causes. These investigations were crucial for identifying potential vulnerabilities and implementing corrective measures to prevent recurrence.

4.6.5 Despite the challenges presented by these P1 incidents, our commitment to continuous improvement remained steadfast. The insights gained from each incident were used to enhance our incident response strategies, refine our processes, and improve our overall service resilience. These efforts are vital for maintaining the trust and confidence of our partners. We have critically examined our change management process and implemented stricter oversight measures.

#### 4.7 Priority 2 - Serious Issues

4.7.1 A Priority 2 (P2) is a serious issue is defined as an incident that results in either unavailability or degradation of a service which, whilst material, does not meet the threshold for a P1 (Tier 2).

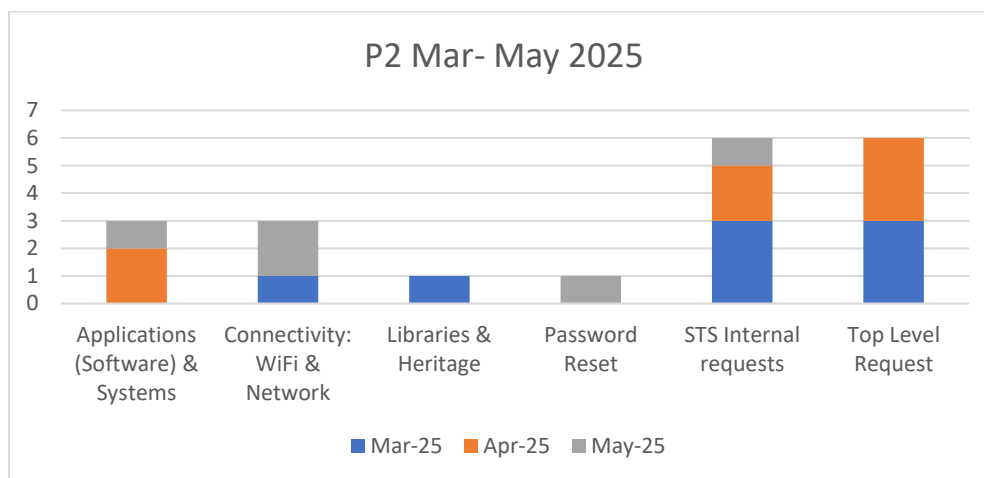
4.7.2 There were 20 P2 calls raised in STS Hornbill operational queues during this reporting period.

The target KPI is 30 or less per month. The chart below shows the service categories that the P2 incidents were logged against in this reporting period and the number raised in each month.

The target SLA for P2 is 8 hours. Some of the reported issues have breached the SLA due to the complexity of the issues.

4.7.3 The SLA resolution KPI target is 95% in 8 hours or less. Due to the limited number of P2 tickets raised and the complexity of some of the issues we have not been able to meet this KPI.

4.7.4 The impact of the P2 events on users varied significantly depending on the nature of the issue. For example, some incidents led to the unavailability of critical business applications, causing workflow disruptions. Users experienced difficulties in accessing essential services, which in turn affected their productivity and overall user experience. Additionally, some P2 incidents resulted in the degradation of key functionalities, compelling users to find alternative solutions or workarounds, which were often less efficient and more time-consuming.



#### 4.8 Priority 3 – General Issues

4.8.1 A Priority 3 (P3) issue is defined as one that results in a partial loss of service or functionality with no or limited business impact and for which a workaround may be available.

4.8.2 P3 incidents are the most frequent type of incident as they typically pertain to issues faced by individual users. Our SLA target is to resolve 90% of these incidents within two working days.

4.8.3 P3 incidents logged during this reporting period.

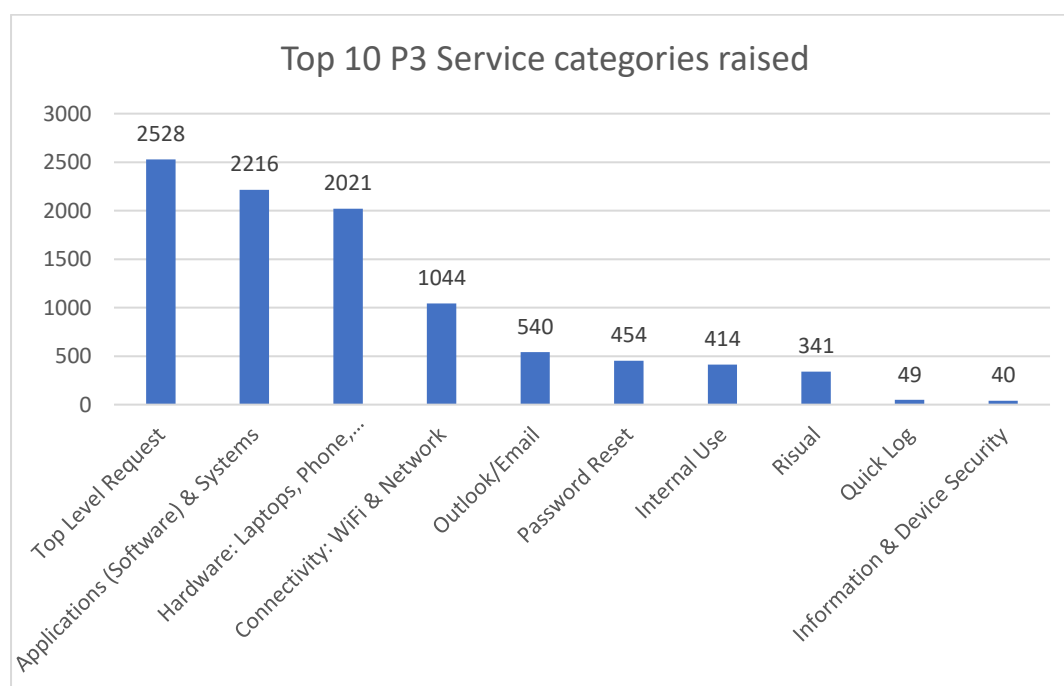
- STS Operational teams (front office include the service desk and on-site teams) – 9,763 with an overall SLA performance of 85%
- All STS teams (back office includes infrastructure and EUC teams) - 10,126 with an overall SLA performance of 84%
- These statistics highlight the varying efficiency and capacity of different teams across the partnership. The high-resolution rate of the STS team suggests a strong capability to handle a large volume of tickets effectively, which positively impacts user experience by ensuring that most issues are resolved promptly.
- Breakdown is as follows:

	Total P3 tickets raised	SLA%
<b>Brent Applications teams</b>	2185	66%
<b>Lewisham Applications Teams</b>	967	64%
<b>LGA Applications Teams</b>	19	47%
<b>Shared technology Services (All Teams)</b>	10126	84%
<b>Southwark Applications Teams</b>	321	38%

4.8.4 A significant number of tickets are classified under 'top level request,' indicating that staff often select the 'other' option rather than a specific category when logging tickets. Moving forward, we will implement AI for ticket categorisation to ensure precision and make it a key feature in our next ITSM tool selection.

4.8.5 To enhance operational efficiency and improve user experience, we are planning to upgrade our estate with Windows 11 and newer laptops. This initiative will significantly reduce the number of software and hardware issues currently being encountered. With the introduction of more advanced and reliable technology, we aim to streamline processes, minimise downtime, and ensure our teams can perform at optimal levels.

4.8.6 The top 10 categories for P3 calls logged in STS Hornbill operational queues during this reporting period are illustrated in both chart and table formats.



## 4.9 Priority 4 - Service Requests

4.9.1 A Priority 4 (P4) request is defined as a request for standard service or catalogue item. The target SLA is to resolve 80% within 5 working days (although SLA can be negotiated with the user logging the call depending on

the nature of the request e.g. a request for a new network link to a site to be installed – this can take several months).

4.9.2 More typical requests are for access to shared data (files, folders, shared mailboxes), Deployment of applications/services onto a laptop, or a request for new IT equipment such as a mobile phone.

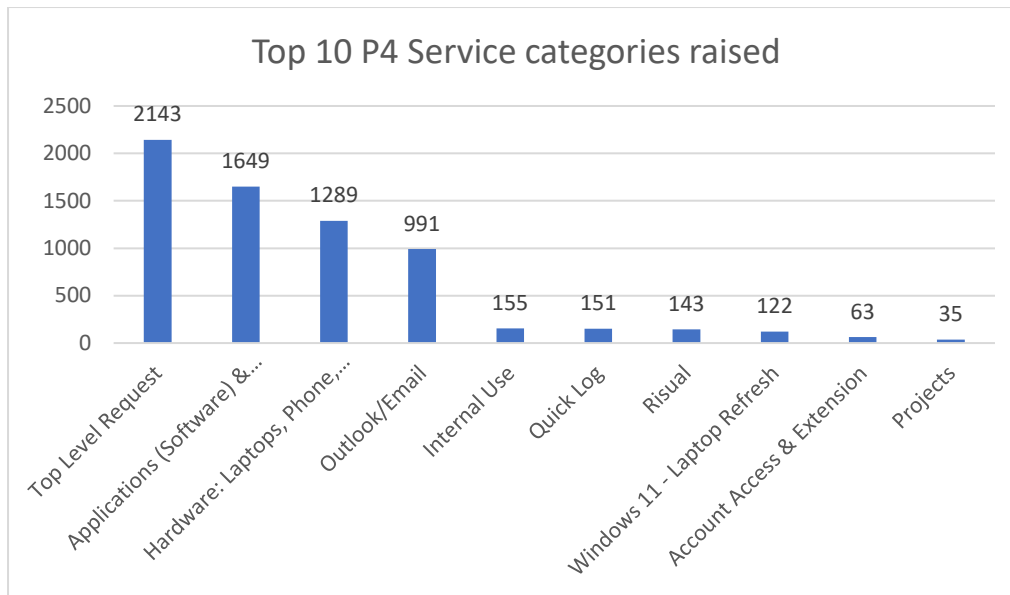
4.9.3 P4 incidents logged during this reporting period.

- STS Operational teams - 6788 with an overall SLA performance of 90%
- All STS teams - 10,126 with an overall SLA performance of 89%

	Total P4 tickets raised	SLA %
<b>Brent Applications teams</b>	9419	71%
<b>Lewisham Applications Teams</b>	2131	78%
<b>LGA Applications Teams</b>	57	51%
<b>Shared technology Services</b>	7750	89%
<b>Southwark Applications Teams</b>	4251	87%

4.9.4 The trends observed are consistent with those of P3 call raised categories. Notably, there has been a limited number of tickets associated with the ongoing Windows 11 rollouts due to the comprehensive after-care provided post-deployment.

4.9.5 The top call raised categories for P4 calls logged in STS Hornbill operational queues during this reporting period, shown below in both chart and table formats.



#### 4.10 Onsite support

4.10.1 The onsite teams across the three partner councils typically take care of four major functions:

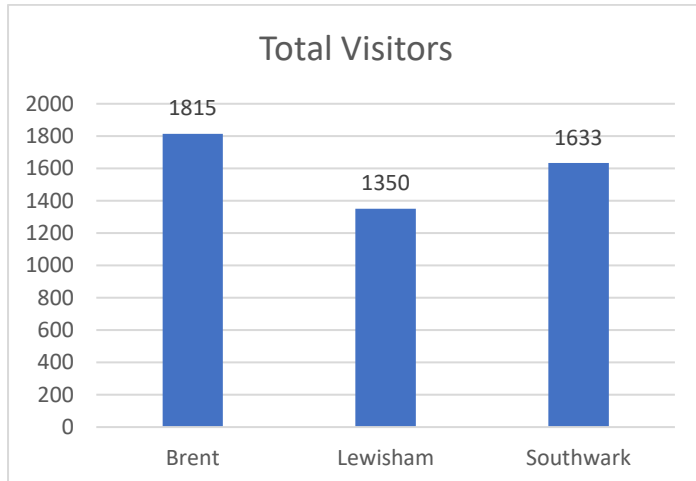
- Local on-site support in the main partner offices (Brent Civic, Lewisham Laurence House and Southwark Tooley Street).
- Non-main office site support. Between them the three councils have around 230 office sites that STS manages network links to.
- Starters, Movers and Leavers (SMaL) acceptance and processing.
- Conducting and organising hardware repairs, both in and out of warranty.

4.10.2 To enhance user satisfaction, the on-site support service is operational continuously from 08:00 to 18:00 at the main offices of Brent Civic Centre, Lewisham Laurence House, and Southwark Tooley Street. These strategically designated and well-signposted areas ensure a consistent, high-quality user experience.

Additionally, a new reception area has been established at Tooley Street to enhance the experience of face-to-face interactions. Further ongoing design enhancements are aimed at optimising the seating and service areas.

4.10.3 The QMinder system allows us to provide a controlled queueing and notification mechanism for those users needing face-to-face support. The statistics for this reporting period (March 2025 to May 2025) produced by QMinder show that across the three main partner locations:

- During this reporting period, the onsite support teams across the three partner councils handled a total of 4,798 visits, averaging 1,599 visits per month. This level of activity is consistent with previous months.
- Visitor distribution by location is displayed in the accompanying graph, underscoring the steady demand for face-to-face support services across all partner councils.



- There has been a noticeable reduction in customer waiting times, with the average wait time decreasing to 10 minutes from 16 minutes in the previous period, across all sites. Efforts have been made to attend to visitors as promptly as possible, including fast-tracking those collecting peripherals.
- Across all locations, the service time averaged 24 minutes, reflecting an improvement from the previous period's 32-minute average.

4.10.4 Reasons for users visiting the onsite support teams are broadly similar with the categories for each council.

- Some of the categories differed among the partners. This issue has been rectified since April, and we now classify visits into six standardised categories. There are now only 6 categories going forward.
- The trends across partners indicate a high volume of visits for laptop and mobile repairs, which remain the most frequent reason for onsite support.

Brent Onsite Support	
Sum of Wi-Fi/Internet Issues	183
Sum of Laptop/iPhone Hardware Repairs	641
Sum of New Starters/Leavers/Movers	279
Sum of Laptop/Mobile Hardware Repairs	1
Sum of Applications	237
Sum of Password/Account Locked issues	138
Sum of IT Accessories	332

Sum of Hardware	6
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#### **Lewisham Onsite Support**

Sum of Wi-Fi/Internet Issues	190
Sum of Laptop/Mobile Hardware Repairs	518
Sum of Laptop/iPhone Return - Leaver	34
Sum of New Starters/Leavers/Movers	233
Sum of Lewisham Homes Support	4
Sum of Applications	153
Sum of Password/Account Locked Issues	82
Sum of Other	76
Sum of Hardware	25
Sum of IT Accessories	52

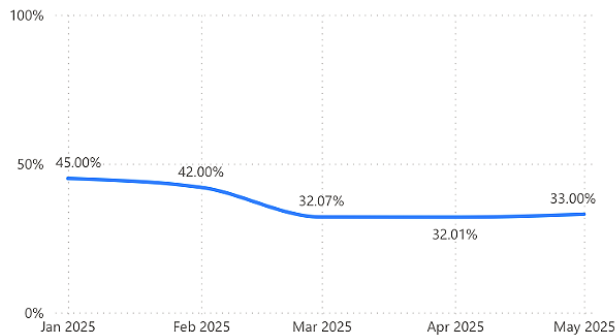
#### **Southwark Onsite Support**

Sum of Wi-Fi/Internet Issues	137
Sum of Laptop/iPhone Hardware Repairs	576
Sum of Laptop/iPhone Return - Leaver	27
Sum of New Starters/Leavers/Movers	237
Sum of Applications	231
Sum of Hardware	14
Sum of Password/Account Locked Issues	130
Sum of Other	179
Sum of IT Accessories	148

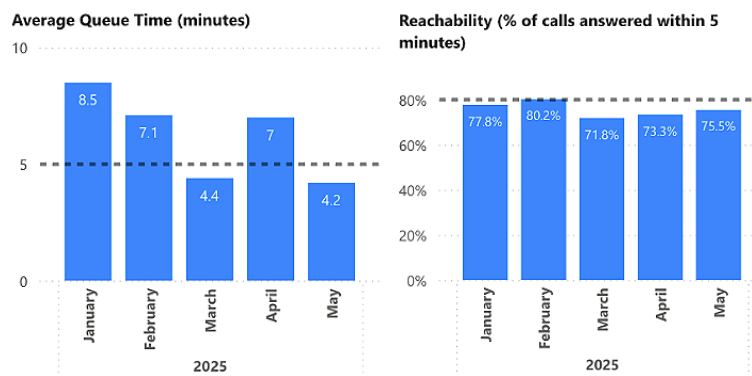
## 4.11 Telephony Support

- 4.11.1 Node4 (previously Risual) serves as our primary telephone service provider for the IT Service Desk. When employees contact the IT Service Desk, their calls are routed to Node4 engineers who operate on behalf of all three councils. These engineers possess the necessary access permissions to autonomously resolve tickets. To ensure they can accurately navigate our system configurations, they have been provided with detailed scripts. Enhanced collaboration and knowledge sharing between STS and Node4 engineers are facilitated through a dedicated Teams Chat and weekly meetings. Furthermore, monthly service reviews are conducted to monitor KPIs and identify emerging trends.

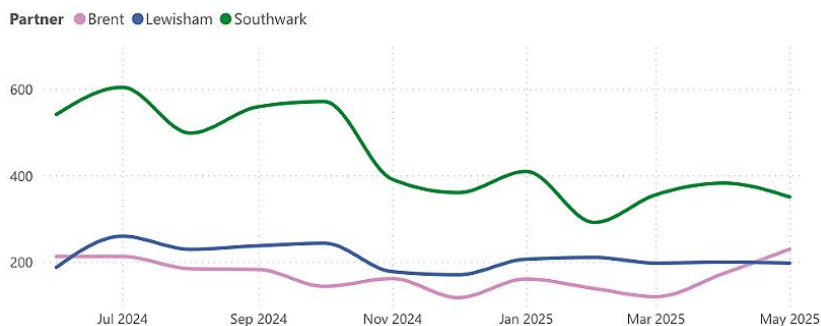
- The first-time fix rate performance has dipped as there has been a focus on reducing the wait time.
- The table below shows the first-time fix rate performance.



- Average queue time has greatly improved as it dipped to 7min. It is now at the expected level below 5minutes.



- The volume of tickets raised by our partner has remained steady throughout this reporting period, with no notable fluctuations in trends.



4.11.2 In our continued efforts to enhance the service provided by Node4, we have initiated discussions to expand the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) options available to users when they contact the IT Service Desk. This initiative aims to streamline the process by allowing callers to access self-help resources or receive advice without needing direct intervention from engineers. By improving the IVR system, we can potentially reduce the volume of tickets raised, thereby improving overall efficiency and user satisfaction. Additionally,

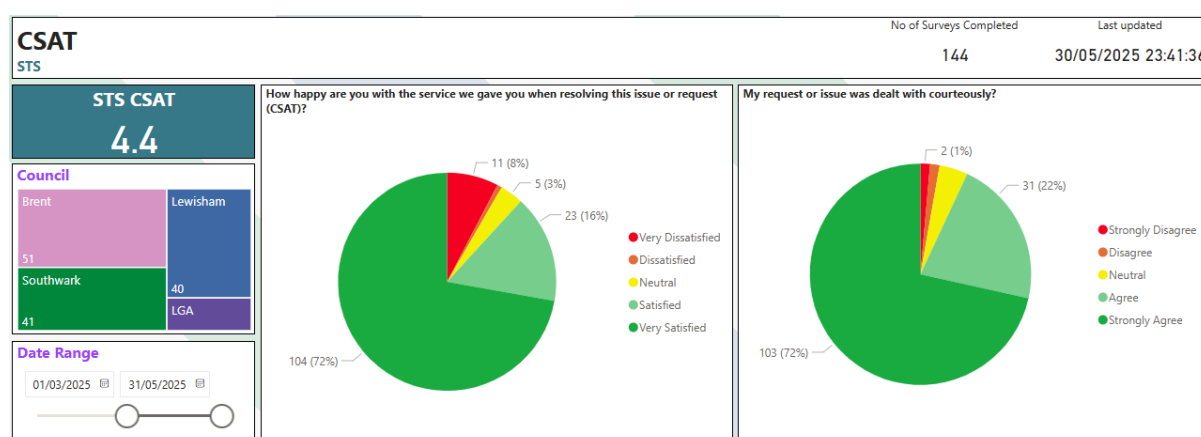
this will free up Node4 engineers to focus on more complex issues that require their specialised expertise, ensuring a more effective use of resources and faster resolution times for critical tickets.

## 4.12 User Satisfaction

4.12.1 As part of understanding how satisfied colleagues are with the service they have received from STS, since the start of the year we have introduced a new Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) survey to replace the previous Net Promotor Score (NPS) based system.

STS Service desk follows up with all very dissatisfied and dissatisfied responses within two working days, ensuring that these interactions are meticulously recorded in a centralised system. This proactive approach not only addresses immediate concerns but also aids in enhancing the overall quality of support services.

4.12.2 The CSAT survey results for the reporting period are shown below with an average score of 4.4 out of 5.



## 4.12.3 CSAT Survey response analysis

The number of surveys completed in the reporting period is significantly lower than the previous reporting period. The reduced sample set has impacted the average score.

There have been fewer very dissatisfied and dissatisfied responses compared to the previous reporting period.

Follow up engagement and analysis of the very dissatisfied and dissatisfied responses has highlighted some false positives, where the reporting staff had selected the wrong option and was satisfied with the support service provided.

STS service desk teams are actively encouraging staff to complete the Customer survey when engaging with staff, to improve the number of surveys completed.

STS are reviewing the CSAT process to improve the number of surveys completed.

Total number of surveys submitted		
Fiscal quarter	# Surveys	Average score out of 5 (1 is poor, 5 good)
Jan – Feb 2025	224	4.5
March – May 2025	144	4.4

Very dissatisfied\ dissatisfied responses		
Fiscal quarter	Total number	# false positives
Jan – Feb 2025	15	3
March – May 2025	12	4

#### 4.13 Overall Call Number Statistics

- 4.13.1 1 STS had 36,158 tickets logged between March – May 2025 for all council Application/Service teams as well as the Shared Service, against 40,947 in Dec 24 – Feb 25.

Tickets assigned to STS teams have increased between March 25 – May 25 compared to December 24 – February 25.

	Dec 2024 – Feb 2025			
	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Total
Brent Application teams	3508	3216	2888	9612
Lewisham Application teams	1042	889	767	2698
LGA Applications teams	47	37	42	126
Shared Technology Services teams	7500	6794	5438	19732
Southwark Applications teams	1536	1385	1068	3989
Totals	<b>13633</b>	<b>12321</b>	<b>10204</b>	<b>36158</b>

	March 2025 - May 2025			
	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Total
Brent Application teams	4132	3786	3814	11732
Lewisham Application teams	957	1144	1035	3136
LGA Applications teams	56	40	29	125
Shared Technology Services teams	6994	7060	7313	21367

Southwark Applications teams	1473	1661	1453	4587
Totals	<b>13612</b>	<b>13691</b>	<b>13644</b>	<b>40947</b>

#### 4.14 Service Improvements

4.14.1 As we continue to improve performance against key SLA KPIs, we are also looking at how we can improve the customer experience. Some of the key actions around this are:

- VIP Teams Chat service: Expanded the rollout of a Teams chat service between the on-site team, executive office and the cabinet office in Lewisham.
- Enhanced Qminder (face to face) support: This service is used to manage the on-site demand. The demand has been increasing as more staff work from the partner core sites. More team members covering QMinder to support the demand where we are triaging visitors to optimise the wait and serve times.
- Clear Desk Policy: The on-site team is ensuring that a clear desk policy is enforced, and all desks are kept clear of any clutter and the surrounding areas.
- Enhanced utilisation of build and storage areas: The build rooms are currently being reorganised to reduce the clutter and extra desks. Multiple disposals have been conducted by the team and Good Things Foundation to dispose of legacy and unneeded IT kit.
- Full Council and AGM IT presence: There will be an IT presence prior to the Full council meetings and AGMs where IT support staff will present outside the meeting areas with spare equipment for any swap outs and provide general IT support.
- iPhones repair service: Repairing of iPad and iPhone service with a third party (local SME).
- Management of escalations and CSAT: Customer feedback is acted on within 48hrs where possible and escalations within Hornbill are regularly monitored.
- Improved SLAs: There has been a significant improvement by both service desk and onsite teams.

4.14.2 Hornbill Call Triage. We continue to optimise our call triage processes. Steps include:

- Ensuring accurate categorisation of the call, distinguishing between Incident and Request, which determines the priority and subsequent resolution SLA.
- Verifying that sufficient information has been provided for the issue or request, and if not, updating the call to request additional details from the user.
- Strategic triage operations are now centralised at the central service desk, ensuring that all tickets receive attention within 20 minutes of being logged.

- Assigning the call to the appropriate team for further investigation and resolution.

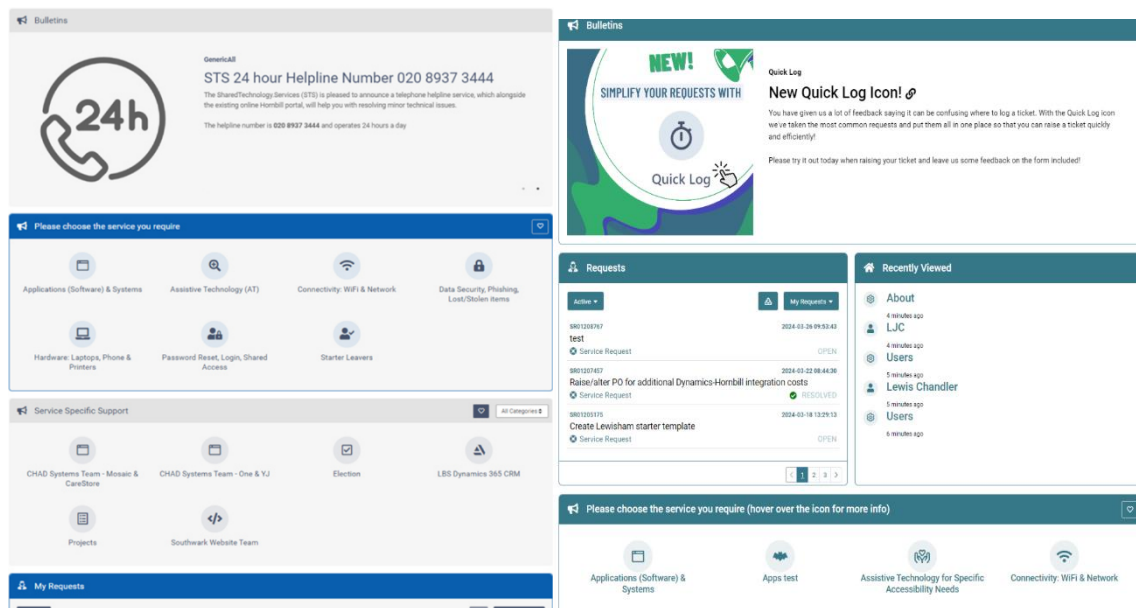
4.14.3 Hornbill Call Escalation. The Hornbill call escalation process has been refined to ensure prompt attention to priority tickets. Escalations should be utilised when the call resolution time SLA is at risk of breach, or if a priority reassignment is necessary. The escalation process involves four levels of intervention:

1. Contact the engineers assigned to the call via the Hornbill portal or call the engineer directly.
2. Email the IT escalation mailbox. This mailbox is monitored by a team leader who will investigate and aim to resolve your incident, request or complaint.
3. Email the STS Service Desk Manager.
4. Email STS Head of Operations & Service Desk Manager

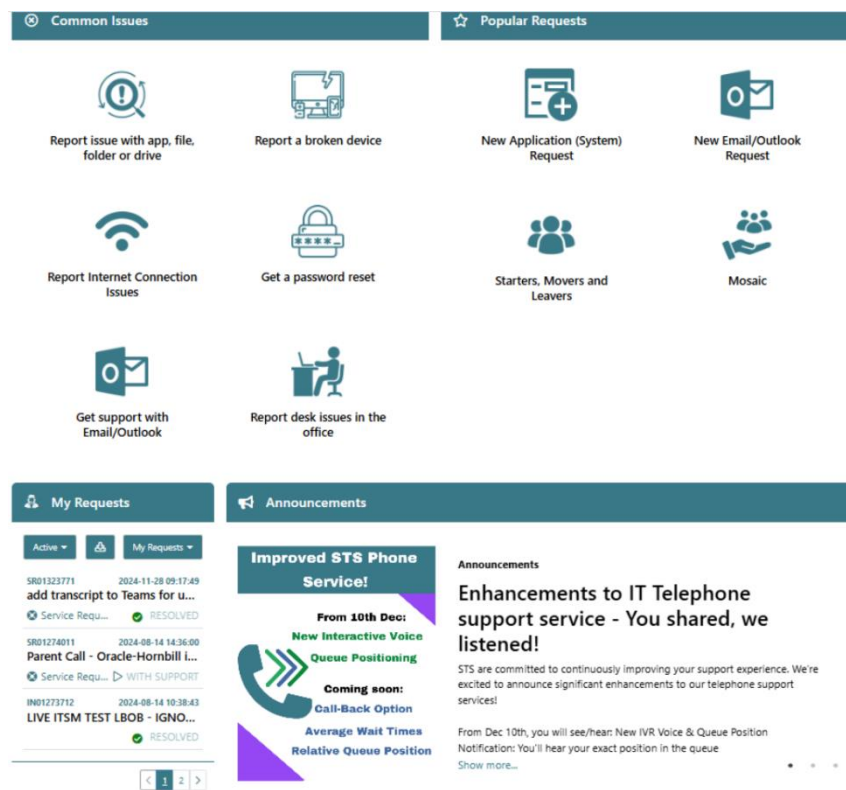
We have categorised certain users within Hornbill as VIPs. This designation is reserved for individuals whose roles are critical to council operations and who may require expedited handling of their calls to prevent any disruption to business functions. The triage queue is closely monitored for VIP calls, which are immediately assigned to an engineer, ensuring prompt attention and resolution.

## **5 Continuous Service Improvement**

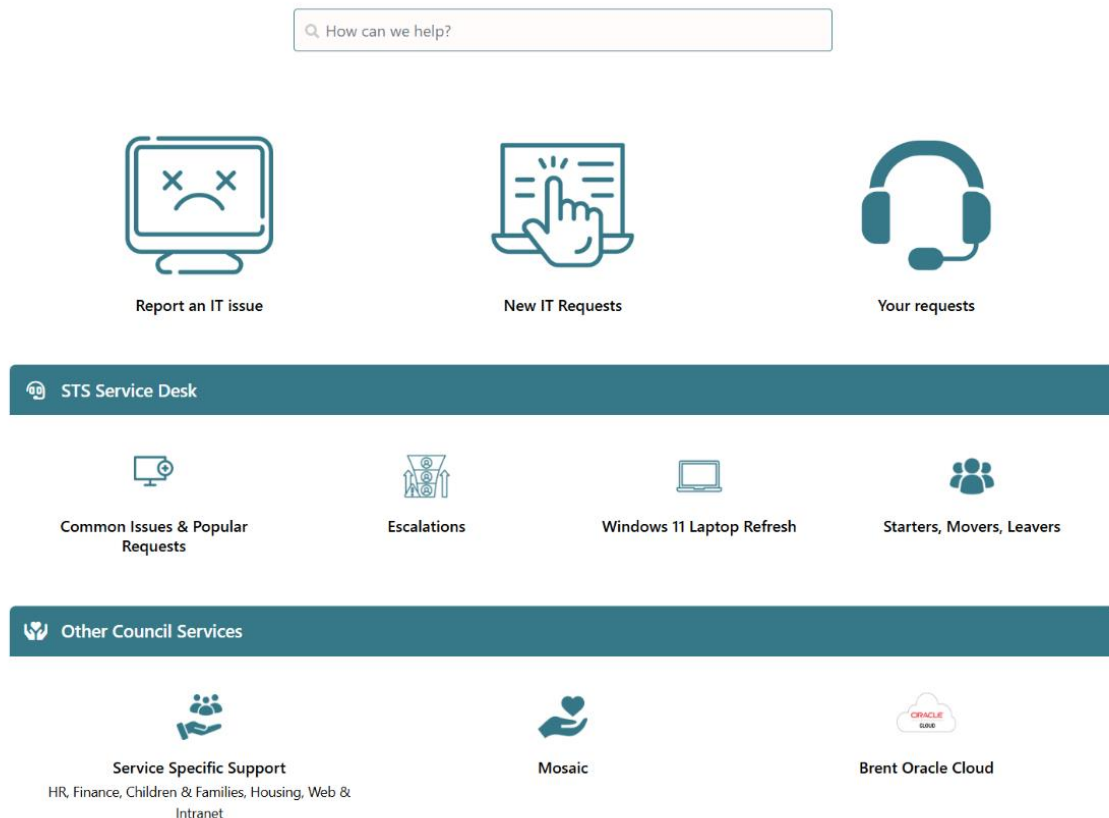
- 5.1 The Service Improvement Team have focused efforts on a wide-scale improvement of the Hornbill Customer Portal. This comprehensive redesign started with establishing new design principles including stylings and language used, and placed importance on ease of use, speed of raising a ticket, and gathering the correct information to allow a ticket to be triaged efficiently and acted on quickly.
- 5.2 Phase 1 centred around improving the Home Page and the links on it, narrowing down the initial options for a user to reduce decision and fatigue and improve the customer journey. Items are now clearly signposted, forms and their wording are much clearer, and the design allows for further development as it is easier to manipulate.
- 5.3 Phase 1 was completed in March. This iteration of the Home Page stands out from the rest as being simple and cleaner in design. Previous Home Pages have been cluttered and confusing.
- 5.4 October 2022 (left) and March 2024 (right) had poor UX and UI.



5.5 In December 2024 the portal was better but still had some way to go.



5.6 From March 2025 onwards we now have the below, which allows for quicker logging and an improved overall User Experience.



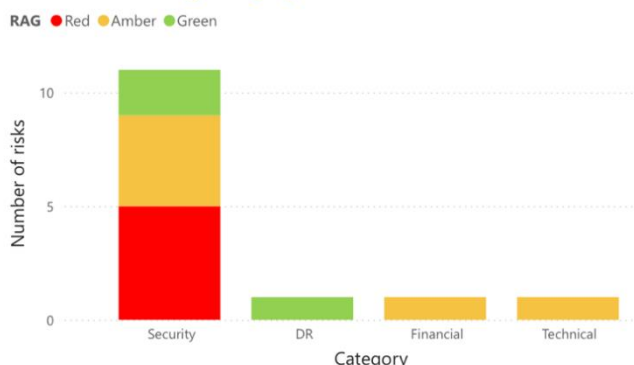
- 5.7 Phase 2 is now underway, with three main focuses. The first is improving the Customer Journey for the other areas that use Hornbill for ticketing e.g. HR, Finance, Digital & Web, Children & Adults. These services are all integral to the council's staff, along with IT/STS. The Service Improvement Team have engaged with Service Owners to support with their own redesign, including design principles. A new internal Hornbill domain for Brent Oracle Cloud is already completed, and the BOC team have given very positive feedback for their new design.
- 5.8 The second area of focus is Closure Code improvement, centred around the addition of root causes as closure codes. The reporting from this will allow STS to match up root causes with symptoms from Incidents to develop Root Cause Analysis, Infer problems and tackle common causes to reduce tickets in the long term.
- 5.9 Lastly, the team will be identifying common issues and requests with a view to increase areas of self-service and potential automation. The team are working with the Brent digital team on self-service guides that can be used across platforms.
- 5.10 The SI Team have also been developing an improvement to the Hornbill Asset Management System which entails altering the status and sub-status fields to match the life cycle of assets. Currently the AMS has three fields used for describing the location, ownership and status of an asset but this will be simplified with the update.

- 5.11 This has been developed with support from Southwark TDS and shared with the other councils for sign off. STS On-site teams have been shown the new statuses and are in agreement. They will be supported once the Change is made.
- 5.12 To ensure this data is clean enough to cut-over to the new statuses, a data tidy and reconciliation is underway. This has resulted in deletion of duplicates and improved accuracy of data.
- 5.13 The SI Team have researched and proposed a new STS Service Catalog. Following on from a department-wide information session, the team have met with team managers to develop and co-design the Catalog. The aim with this is to clearly define the services STS provide and collate all information around ownership, responsibilities and processes.
- 5.14 As part of the Continuous Improvement of Change Management, a new process has been workshopped and tested, with a view to implement very soon. This involves improvement of the Change Submission Form to ensure engineers capture the correct information and an altered approval sequence, with relevant teams reviewing and approving the Change pre-CAB to ensure Changes are planned correctly and all elements are captured.

## 6 Risks

- 6.1 Our STS risk register is reviewed monthly by the Senior Leadership Team and uses Microsoft "Lists" so that it is available to all senior IT management in the partner Councils.
- 6.2 At the last Joint Committee, we included a full breakdown of our current Risk Register as a closed item.
- 6.3 Below shows the RAG status of our current actively managed risks. Most risks are related to Cyber security, which is unlikely to change.

Number of risks by Category and RAG



## 7 Audits

- 7.1 The last period has seen the following audits progress:

- Southwark Financial Reporting Review – Final report issued May 2025 with a rating of “Moderate” for Design Opinion and “Moderate” for Design Effectiveness, with 1 recommendation for the shared service to provide minutes and actions of the monthly review meetings.
- Brent IT Project Management Review – Final report issued April 2025 with a rating of “Moderate Assurance”. One recommendation is outstanding, around implementation of a centralised risk and issues register across the portfolio. This is currently being implemented with a target of August for completion.

7.2 The plan for FY25/26 audits was discussed on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and is currently as follows:

#	Partner	Proposed Audit Title	Outline description / reasoning	Proposed Timing	Circulated?	Status	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	Southwark	Backup and Restoration review	Including which systems are backed up	Q1		Scoping				
2	Brent	Assurance Mapping	External assurance mapping	Q1		Scoping				
3	Brent	Asset Management	Stock management / stock control / physical security of assets	Q2		Not started				
4	Southwark	Cyber Security - Vulnerabilities	Annual Cyber audit. Would suggest vulnerability management	Q2		Not started				
5	Lewisham	On Site IT Support processes	Review of processes and procedures for On Site team	Q2		Not started				
6	Lewisham	JML/SMaL	Including allocation and retrieval of licenses. Access control for 3rd parties	Q3		Not started				
7	Southwark	Major Incident response / Business Continuity	IT response, liaison with EP team where necessary	Q3		Not started				

7.3 Recommendation Actions progress summary is below:

### Open Audit Actions

Partner	High	Medium	Total
<b>Brent</b>			
3rd Party Supply Chain	1		1
IT Project Management		1	1

7.4 Since the last report, 7 audit recommendations have been completed. In total, we currently have just 2 recommendations where actions are underway:

Partner	Audit	Task Name	Priority
Brent	3rd Party Supply Chain	Ref 1c - Redacted	High
Brent	IT Project Management	Ref 1 – Risk and Issue Tracking – Control Design	Medium

## 8 Technology Road Map 2026 and Forward Plan

8.1 Below is the next 6-month view of our Technology Roadmap Projects (planned and in-flight):



- Brent – Have completed the DPIA & EIA and have sign off from HR and Unions.
- Lewisham – Have completed DPIA & EIA signed off by Lewisham.
- Southwark – Have completed DPIA & EIA and have sign off from HR & Unions.

## 9.2 Laptop Always On VPN

The council's remote working system, Microsoft Direct Access, was useful during the pandemic; however, it experienced speed and connection limitations. Additionally, Microsoft has announced that it will no longer develop this product. Consequently, a new solution, AlwaysOn VPN, has been introduced to provide seamless connectivity to all Microsoft services. This replacement addresses the existing limitations and aligns with Microsoft's future development direction, ensuring optimised performance and enhanced connectivity for the council's remote workforce.

- 9.2.1 Southwark's AlwaysOn VPN deployment was completed successfully in November 2023.
- 9.2.2 The deployment of AlwaysOn VPN has been incorporated into the LGA laptop refresh project and is currently being deployed with the new hardware running Windows 11.
- 9.2.3 Brent has successfully deployed AlwaysOn VPN on the new Windows 11 laptops to over 1300 officers.
- 9.2.4 Following the Brent model Lewisham will deploy AlwaysOn VPN as part of the deployment of new laptops and upgrades to Windows 11 operating system.
- 9.2.5 VPN is a module of a wider group of security tools, Southwark have expressed their interest in Zero Trust Security, which we are conducting a proof of value exercise which will be completed late 2025.

## 9.3 Network Upgrades

The proposed solution involves implementing SD-WAN technology to replace the current dedicated leased line site-to-site circuits. SD-WAN offers the advantage of utilising internet connections instead, providing significantly enhanced flexibility in routing network traffic. For instance, traffic related to Microsoft 365 applications such as MS Teams and email can be directed straight from the site to Microsoft servers, bypassing the need to route through the council data centres. This upgrade promises to optimise network efficiency and improve overall connectivity for the councils' operations.

- 9.3.1 Brent has 48 (was 55) connections in scope across 38 sites. These 48 inflight connections are in various stages of delivery, 3 completed (previously 0) and 7 (was 2) removed from scope.

9.3.2 Lewisham has 34 (previously 38) connections in scope across 31 sites (was 36). 3 (was 0) have been completed, and 3 (was 0) have been removed from scope.

9.3.3 Southwark has 119 connections in scope, which has now increased to 150 over a total of 112 sites (was 111). To date 51 (it was 19) connections have been completed, and 10 (was 6) removed from scope.

#### 9.4 Windows 2012 Upgrades

All councils operate multiple Windows 2012 servers, with their support stated to end in October 2023. It is crucial that we prioritise upgrading these systems. Additionally, for services expected to continue beyond October 2023, we have procured additional licenses to ensure extended support. This is imperative to ensure that we continue to get updates to protect us from any cyber threats.

9.4.1 The Brent server estate, which originally comprised 218 servers running Windows Server 2012, is scheduled to have 211 servers either decommissioned or in the process of being decommissioned by the end of June 2025. The remaining 7 servers are currently undergoing this process with target dates agreed with the Project Sponsor.

9.4.2 Lewisham server estate which originally comprised 212 servers running Windows Server 2012, is scheduled to have 196 servers either decommissioned or in the process of being decommissioned by the end of June 2025. The remaining 16 servers are currently undergoing this process with target dates currently being reviewed with the Project Sponsor.

9.4.3 Southwark server estate originally comprised of 87 servers running Windows 2012. Of those servers identified for STS migration, 30 were out of scope, 56 have been decommissioned. The remaining server requires third-party action.

9.4.4 LGA Windows 2012 server migration project has completed successfully.

9.4.5 The Lewisham Homes Windows 2012 server project consists of 89 servers, 52 of which have been decommissioned. The project continues to progress the residual servers.

## 10 Procurement Updates

### 10.1 Governance & Strategy:

The new Procurement Act went live on 24th February 2025. As previously advised, there are significant changes to the governance processes followed and the routes to market.

Tender templates are currently being updated in conjunction with the new Procurement Act and updated changes to Brent's Constitution. The main changes are in relation to the Low Value threshold, which has increased from £25k to £30k meaning anything below £30k will not require a full procurement

exercise. However, it should be noted that a lot of the low level spend items could be where the cost efficiency opportunities lie and suppliers will have a high markup on goods/services.

Work has been undertaken to review our Forward Plan as to which contracts may be liable to the PA23 and those which Procurement can be carried out under PCR2015. Majority of contracts will still be eligible via existing Frameworks we have utilised under PCR2015. However, there are opportunities to conduct Open Tender procedures for specific requirements that will draw best value for money and open up the market. Some of the existing Frameworks under PCR2015 will soon expire and therefore some future provisions will soon likely be under the regulations.

Procurement is devising a Category Strategy across the subcategories within Digital and IT. We have identified the leverage purchasing opportunities and possible areas for innovation, such as embedding bespoke frameworks to allow for greater Contract Management and potential revenue streams. STS are also looking at exploring additional explicit clauses within new Contracts to mitigate lost opportunities such as Price Adjustment clauses, Social Value reimbursements etc.

- 10.2 The Procurement team are working with key suppliers on how they will deliver Social Value within the contracts. Further to this, Procurement have created an additional clause to be inserted into all new contract above £100k in value. The clause allows the authority to hold the supplier responsible for the monetary reimbursement of any Social Value that is not delivered. It becomes a Contractual Obligation. Whereas previously this was ambiguous and not an explicit clause in our contracts.

- 10.3 The tender for the provision of laptops for Southwark has concluded. The current stage is in Contract Award, reviewing terms and conditions. Procurement have also successfully negotiated a discount with the Supplier for the proposed Service Wrap costs. These costs are below 10% of the overall contract value and will therefore be executed as a Contract Variation.

The tender for provision of Laptops for Lewisham was published on the 17 June 2025 and will close on 15 July 2025. The Tender Pack was modified at the request of Lewisham to include the provision of sample devices to be provided from tenderers and a testing phase before final award.

- 10.4 Service Desk Telephone Support - STS Service Desk Telephone Support Tender was awarded to Node4.

- 10.5 Telecoms Expense Management Service - STS

Awaiting contract signing. STS have negotiated pricing with Nuvoli. An Options Paper has been drafted on the overall Performance of VMO2 under the Mobile, Voice and Data Contract. It is currently under review and will be presented at Joint Management Board. The Paper details the ongoing performance issues

and proposed recommendations in 2026 as to either utilise available extension or consider retender.

10.6 Vulnerability Management Tool – Qualys

STS approved and Awarded of the contract to Qualys reseller.

10.7 Provision of Cybersecurity Solution – CrowdStrike

STS awarded for 12 months.

10.8 Provision of Web security Solution – Force Point – STS

Procurement has received sign off on renewal of FP. Pricing has been negotiated. Awarded for 12 months.

10.9 Provision of Cloud storage for LB of Southwark – Netapp - STS

Contract awarded for 12 months after seeking 3 quotes.

10.10 Netcall – STS Contract Expiring in May 2025

Brent have decided not to renew and are migrating to 8x8 functionality. Lewisham have extended for an additional 1 year. Southwark also renewed for 12 months whilst they work on the functionality to be transferred over to 8x8.

10.11 Egress Secure email

The Councils have reduced the number of licences; Southwark has reduced the number significantly. All Councils are reviewing process and using Microsoft Purview to reduce the number of Egress Licences even further in the future.

10.12 F5 – Microsoft Licences Lewisham have added F5 add-on with Brent & Southwark also to join.

10.13 Microsoft Unified Support Current contracts end 31st March and will require re-procurement. OMG sign off is required to proceed.

10.14 Hornbill - Provision of Service Desk Platform 12 months awarded following internal sign off.

10.15 Provision of Ivanti (User Workspace Manager) - Southwark

Confirmation awaited from Southwark if this is still required. Contract ends 30th April and will require re-procurement.

10.16 STS have extended Ricoh UK Limited: Printing Services - extended by 12 months. Two further 12-month permissible extensions are available as part of the existing contract. A project is being created to carry out soft market testing in readiness for contract renewal in 2026.

- 10.17. Telecoms Expense Management Service – Contract renewal for 24 months. Pricing negotiated with Nuvoli.
- 10.18 8x8 telephony (back end) STS have renewed the unified comms (back-end telephony) with 8x8. Partners are procuring their own Contact Centre Applications.
- 10.19 Microsoft Licences for Lewisham, Procurement to be executed shortly. Awaiting sign off on governance report.
- 10.20 Microsoft Licences for LGA, Procurement to be executed shortly. Awaiting confirmation of item quantities from LGA.
- 10.21 Procurement are actively reviewing existing Contracts and retrospectively embedding Contract Management Plans.
- 10.22 The Procurement Team have recently recruited a Procurement Officer and Licence & Subscriptions Officer in line with previous staff leaving. We are leading a diverse team and focusing on mentoring staff for both short- and long-term objectives. We are fostering a culture of continuous improvement, with a strong emphasis on training, upskilling, and forward planning.
- 10.23 Social Value

Following the Social Value Delivery Review in March 2025, the purpose of the review was to identify Social Value commitments within all applicable contracts and the challenges to date, in delivery of these commitments. This report looked at the Social Value plans across all partners namely Brent, Lewisham and Southwark and the standards of integrity and professionalism expected from the suppliers in their dealings and practices.

Further from this review, Procurement have been working closer with suppliers to review these commitments and evidence delivery or alternative solutions to where delivery has not happened. Furthermore, Procurement have been adding in a bespoke explicit clause to all new contracts to ensure that suppliers are held financially responsible for the monetary value of these commitments and will reimburse the authority for non-delivery.

Procurement are working collaboratively with suppliers and making more stringent measure contractually that support all the partners Social Value priorities.

## **11 Council Updates**

### **11.1 Brent Digital Update**

- 11.1.1 Brent's digital programme began in 2017 when the Council's first digital strategy was agreed. Cabinet agreed a refreshed Digital Strategy for 2022-26 in December 2021. As part of the delivery of the final year of the current digital

strategy, several programmes of work have been completed including system upgrades, migrations to new software, digital inclusion support for residents and deployment of new apps for residents. Examples of projects delivered from March - June 2025 include:

- Exceeded 2026 connectivity target of 62% (currently 68.6% Full Fibre coverage).
- Over 190 devices have been provided to digitally excluded residents via the Digital Support Fund for Children and Young People and Resident Digital Support Fund.
- Over halfway through the review and streamlining of Social Care Mosaic forms and workflows, with multiple efficiencies identified and CYP already starting to implement the system workflow changes.
- Digital inclusion support for businesses is being rolled out as part of a Digital Support Programme for SMEs, with businesses able to access free advice, webinars and tutorials. The programme will run through until September 2025.
- Staff Digital Skills support is being provided through a dedicated work programme, with drop-in sessions for staff available on how to make their digital tools work best for them.
- Three RPA's have gone live; 8x8 analytics report; hospital discharge details uploaded to Mosaic; Debt recovery report. All have increased efficiency in teams and reduced errors.
- Housing Management Repairs: Successfully deployed the Responsive Repairs and Planned Works (Section 20) onboarding new contractors and SORs uplift to 8.0. This includes new hierarchy setup based on Regions (East/West) for Properties/Blocks & Estates.
- I4B & First Wave: Implemented patches and creation on new dashboards in Dynamics.
- The intelligent Automation team has deployed 2 high and 2 low complexity automations; Adult Social Care- Schedule B Payment; Hospital Discharge to MOSAIC 2; Rent Officer Missing Report and Chief Exec's Complaints. All have increased efficiency in teams, reduced error and enabled faster data driven decisions.
- Brent Councils First Conversational AI parking chatbot is now live, helping residents navigate their parking experience with ease and confidence. Reducing the pressure on the parking team to respond to enquiries.
- Brent now has 157 active users with copilot licenses helping with productivity at work.
- A new Corporate Booking System for use across the council went live called Bookings Plus, helping to increase revenue generation from setting up preferred payments and direct debits early.
- New contract with 8x8 Contact Centre Solution successfully went live 1<sup>st</sup> May, phase two to follow in due course to refine the current setup and leverage additional platform capabilities for maximum benefit.

## 11.2 Lewisham Digital update

11.2.1 Fibre installation completed to approx. 12000 Lewisham Homes properties to provide residents with the option to enable fibre broadband services. Other examples of projects delivered include:

- Completion of 4G/5G connectivity mapping to identify 'not spots' for mobile coverage in MapThat.
- Initiation of Strategic Infrastructure Fund (SIF) fibre installation project to enable digital CCTV in communal properties and hostels.
- Set up and roll out of IT&D Roadmap - we now have a comprehensive record of all projects and significant products within the department.
- Go live of procurement for 2600 laptops and support.
- Completion of IT Project Audit.
- Generic Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Digital projects:
  - Pest Control
  - Bulky Waste
  - MASH Multi Agency safeguarding hub
  - Body Storage – mortuaries
  - Discretionary Housing Payments
- Single View (SystemC) – live and providing specified ASC, CSC & Education and YJ data in one place.
- Groupwork (SystemC) – new module is now live, supporting family centres/children's centres and youth services.
- Bottomline PTX Drive – transitioned to AMT the support & management of software that enables BACS transfers.
- Modern.Gov - transitioned to AMT the support & management of Modern.Gov.
- File Transfers/Scripting - transitioned to AMT the development & support of all file transfer processes (prompted by Server/SQL 2012 Programme).
- Automation developed & introduced for LAS/LCS user management.
- Utility (software) developed & implemented to monitor and alert on key server health.

### 11.3 Southwark Digital Update

#### 11.3.1 Strategic Direction and Governance Reform

The team is working to improve Southwark's partnership with Shared Technology Services (STS). Draft updates to the agreement, covering governance, procurement, and financial principles, have been shared with partners and are being reviewed.

#### 11.3.2 Expanding Infrastructure and Connectivity Initiatives

The team is addressing digital inclusion and infrastructure expansion. There is an ongoing request to extend SD-WAN connectivity and support from STS to communal areas in housing estates and school spaces, currently stalled pending decisions at OMG and JMB.

#### 11.3.3 Cybersecurity and Audit Readiness

Cybersecurity remains a high priority, with several updates:

- **Cyber and Third-Party Supplier Update:** We've strengthened our cyber security posture by implementing a formal third-party supplier assurance framework, introducing Risk Ledger for continuous monitoring, and embedding robust access, audit, and incident response controls across all supplier engagements.
- **Data and Platform Modernisation:** The team continues to lead on data transformation:
  - The Modern Data Platform (MDP) is transitioning to Microsoft Fabric.
  - Access Database(s) replacement has been prioritised in line with the introduction of the Windows 11 laptops. These are being replaced with PowerApps in the main.
- **Robotic Process Automation (RPA):** RPA is being actively deployed across Southwark Council to streamline repetitive, rule-based tasks. Key highlights include:
  - **Use of UiPath:** Southwark has standardised on UiPath for RPA deployments. Staff are encouraged to contact their Business Partner if they identify processes suitable for automation.
  - **Finance Automation:** Bots are already automating invoice checks (24,000 of 60,000 invoices processed) and are set to automate customer profile updates in the finance system.

#### 11.3.4 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is being scaled across the council to support smarter, data-driven services:

- **Strategic Objectives:** AI is central to the TDS 2025–2026 goals, with a focus on expanding automation, improving service delivery, and reducing costs.
- **Generative AI Guidance:** A council-wide guide outlines the benefits and risks of GenAI tools like Copilot and ChatGPT. Key concerns include data privacy, misinformation, and accountability.

#### 11.3.5 Zero Trust Network Access (ZTNA)

ZTNA is a critical component in the Southwark cyber security and infrastructure modernisation strategy:

- **Strategic Shift:** ZTNA is being positioned to replace the legacy F5 VPN, which has been flagged as inadequate and a cyber risk.
- **Current Status:**
  - A proof-of-value exercise is underway, with full rollout for December 25.
  - Meetings have been held and are scheduled to align stakeholders and resolve technical and contractual blockers.
- **Benefits:** ZTNA offers simplified architecture, improved user experience for connectivity, and stronger compliance and monitoring capabilities.

#### 11.3.6 Laptop Rollout

The Laptop Refresh Programme is a major transformation initiative to modernise the council's digital estate. It involves replacing ageing Lenovo laptops with Microsoft Surface devices and upgrading from Windows 10 to Windows 11 across all departments, including libraries and leisure centres.

This change supports:

- The People Powered Workplace strategy.
- Hybrid and flexible working.
- Enhanced security and performance.
- Compliance with Windows 10 end-of-support in October 2025.

The build process has faced delays due to legacy SCCM configurations, outdated policies, and application compatibility issues

- A greenfield build approach was adopted to ensure compliance with NCSC guidelines.
- Compatibility audits are ongoing, with weekly testing sessions involving STS, Leadtec, and Southwark teams.
- Drive mapping standardisation and H: drive dependency resolution are in progress.
- The rollout is currently proceeding with F5 VPN due to ZTNA delays, despite concerns about user experience and security.
- ZTNA remains a strategic priority, with alignment efforts ongoing between STS and Southwark.

## **12 Inter Authority Agreement**

- 12.1 Some revisions have been proposed to the IAA and these are to be presented to the Joint Management Board in February 2025.
- 12.2 We have been working with LOTI on benchmarking the IT service costs against other London Boroughs to ensure that the shared service provides value for money compared to the traditional model of an in-house IT team.

## **13 Strategy Update**

- 13.1 Our existing STS Strategy was presented to the Joint Committee in October 2024.

## **14 Financial Considerations**

- 14.1 The total budget of £17.84M for FY 2025/26 is made up of a combination of non-controllable expenditure of £8.6M and controllable expenditure (staffing and consultancy) of £9.1M.
- 14.2 The YTD spend (April 25) for FY 2025/26 is £3.19M against a full-year budget of £17.84M.
- 14.3 The YTD Spend for the year excludes recharges which are made up of bulk stock orders, project costs that are covered by different funding pots and rechargeable consumables.

- 14.4 We are currently waiting for the results from the value for money review, the London Office of Technology and Innovation are concluding a benchmarking exercise in which all three councils participated alongside the shared service.
- 14.5 STS are in discussions with councils for additional savings which will start in 2026/27. These are likely to be more substantial and will have operational impacts.

## **15 Legal Considerations**

- 15.1 This report is for noting. Therefore, no specific legal implications arise from the report at this stage.
- 15.2 Brent Council hosts the Shared Technology Service, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 15.3 These provisions allow one council to delegate one of its functions to another council as well as allowing two or more councils to discharge their functions jointly with the option of establishing a joint committee.
- 15.4 Joint Committees can in turn delegate functions to one or more officers of the councils concerned.
- 15.5 Decisions of Joint Committees are binding on the participating councils. However, subject to the terms of the arrangement, the council retains the ability to discharge that function itself.

## **16 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 16.1 All STS staff are undergoing EDI training.

## **17 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 17.1 There are none.

## **18 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 18.1 There are none.

## **19 Human Resources/Property Implications**

- 19.1 There are none.

**Report sign off:**

***Minesh Patel***

Corporate Director Finance &  
Resources (Brent Council)