

## Appendix B – Savings Proposals

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## Commissioning and Procurement Savings Proposal

<b>Reference:</b>	CC01 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Cross-Council
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Rubin – Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	<p>The Council spends over £600m annually with third parties. This programme brings together four savings proposals that aim to reduce spend through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. direct supplier engagement / contract management</li> <li>2. reduction of spend on low value (under £25k) contracts,</li> <li>3. the consideration of a management overhead charge on applicable grants</li> <li>4. the introduction of stretch targets through the existing Fast Track payments initiative</li> </ol> <p>The programme will be aligned to the Procurement Improvement Programme (PIP).</p>
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### Financial and Staffing Information

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	Cross Council, spend was £631m on third parties in 23/24.
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	N/A – Cross Council contractual spend with third parties

	<b>2026/27</b> £'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£3,060
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	N/A – saving relates to reduction in third party spend, not staff

<b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement saving</b>	<b>Savings logic</b>	<b>Estimated saving</b>
<b>Overall third party spend</b>	Reducing overall spend with third parties. Overall spend estimated at £631m, a 0.5%	£1,560,000

<b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement saving reduction</b>	<b>Savings logic</b>	<b>Estimated saving</b>
	reduction is modelled.	
<b>Tail spend reduction</b>	An estimated £60m - £90m is spent annually on purchases with a value of less than £25,000. A 10% reduction of spend through tighter management, more visibility and reducing duplication was modelled.	£600,000
<b>Grant management overhead</b>	The Council manages £648m of recurring grant funding per year. Initial, high-level analysis suggests £57m of this could be in scope to charge management overheads. Savings calculation is modelled on 1% of this amount for prudence, and would be realised by the Council utilising an element of the grant to reflect the true cost of delivering and administering these programmes.	£570,000
<b>Greater use of Oxygen finance</b>	Increased use of Oxygen Finance for Fast Track payments. The Fast Track enables invoices to be paid ahead of contractual terms in exchange for a pre-agreed rebate.	£331,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>Savings estimates currently being</b>	<b>£3.071m</b>

### **Proposed savings**

These proposals form part of a wider effort to strengthen the Council's oversight and management of its third-party spend. By reducing overall third-party expenditure, targeting tail spend under £25,000, and introducing an overhead charge on grants, the council can improve value for money, reduce duplication, and ensure internal resources are used more efficiently.

While each initiative targets a specific pressure point, together they represent a coordinated shift towards more consistent and commercially aware commissioning. To support delivery, these changes should sit within existing commissioning and procurement governance, covering the commissioning lifecycle to ensure that third party spending aligns with the council's financial strategy and service priorities, including:

- Understand the future pipeline of projects and potential procurements
- Optimise the use of different procurement methods (including e-auctions, repeat frameworks, dynamic purchasing systems, competitive procedures with negotiation) to deliver better value for money.
- Improve supplier management through the adoption across the Council of contract management toolkit and the support needed to deliver high quality commercial, procurement and sourcing strategies.
- Maximise the use of knowledge around market, supplier, demand and service

design to identify commercial opportunities and influence cost effective service redesign.

- More effective supplier engagement and performance management improving the performance and driving savings out of in-flight contracts and challenge affordability envelope of future commissioning intentions.

## **Delivery and governance**

The programme will be sponsored at Director level through the Director Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement.

The Programme will align with the Procurement Improvement Programme (PIP), enabling monitoring and reporting, as well consideration of appropriate service buy-in, collaboration and capacity to take place through existing governance, including the recently established DPGs.

In addition, this will also enable delivery to be supported by operational improvements being implemented to policies, procedures and processes through the PIP. Monitoring and reporting will also be at the CPCMA which includes representatives from Finance, Legal and the Procurement Team.

### **1. Overall reduction in third party spend**

Estimated third party spend in 23/24 was £631m. Saving figure is modelled on a 0.5% reduction. This could be achieved through:

- Development of contracts and procurement dashboard to support discussion at DLTs
- Desktop review of contracts and engagement with contract managers to review service levels are being met. Review to focus on contracts with a value of over £500,000, with detailed follow-up action capped at 20 contracts. It is expected that ongoing construction contracts will not form part of this review.
- Review of service levels to review where scope could be reduced leading to savings.
- Review of future procurement pipeline with service and contract managers to identify opportunities for savings.
- More effective supplier engagement and performance management improving the performance and driving savings out of in-flight contracts.
- Challenge affordability envelope of future commissioning intentions.
- Active engagement with suppliers to discuss reduction in scope or discounts for continued service.
- Development of key strategic suppliers list for priority engagement. Based on 24/25 highest areas of addressable spend.

To deliver savings against these contract areas, the Commissioning and Procurement teams will need engagement and support from services and contract managers, alongside an openness from these colleagues to approach suppliers and approach re-negotiation collaboratively and creatively.

### **2. Holistic grant management**

Brent Council manages over £788m in grant funding each year, £648m of which are recurring, supporting a wide range of services and delivery partners across the borough. Administering these grants requires significant internal capacity — including legal input, procurement advice, financial processing, monitoring, and reporting. In recognition of this, many public sector bodies — such as the NHS and central government departments — routinely apply overhead or management charges to grant funding to recover these support costs.

This proposal recommends that Brent adopt a similar approach by applying a standard overhead charge of 10%. This would help ensure the council can sustainably resource the work required to manage grant programmes effectively. Where funders raise concerns, the council could negotiate exemptions or reductions on a case-by-case basis.

This overhead charge should apply to all new and recurring grants from April 2026 onwards, unless explicitly exempted. These savings could be realised by the Council retaining an additional portion of the grants received, to ensure the full costs of delivering the services in relation to the grant are covered by the grant.

### **3. Tail spend reduction**

Brent Council engages with hundreds of suppliers each year for purchases under £25,000, which collectively account for a significant share of procurement activity but often lack commercial oversight. This "tail spend" is typically fragmented across services, inconsistent in pricing, and resource-intensive to manage. Other organisations have achieved savings by consolidating spend with key suppliers, restricting off-contract purchasing, and simplifying low-value procurement through catalogues or frameworks.

This proposal recommends that Brent adopts a targeted approach to tail spend reduction, beginning with controls on new supplier setups and a push to consolidate purchases through preferred providers. This will help reduce duplication, improve value for money, and lower administrative effort across departments.

The policy should apply to all purchases under £25,000, with exemptions only in cases where a strategic or specialist need is clearly justified.

### **4. Use of Oxygen finance Fast Track**

With the development of the Procurement Pipeline and the Procurement Improvement Plan (PIP), there is a renewed focus and strategic framework to drive these efforts more aggressively, aiming for greater financial impact.

Several existing suppliers have expressed a proactive willingness to engage, providing a strong foundation to accelerate income growth.

There is significant potential to increase the current annual return from approximately £169k to an ambitious target of £500k in year one, rising to over £1 million by years two and three. Benchmarking against high performing Councils shows that achieving £1 million or more in income via supplier rebates is feasible.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

The proposed savings measures aim to improve efficiency in back-office operations and supplier management. There may be some adjustments in how services are

delivered, particularly during transitions or commissioning updates. To ensure continuity and minimise disruption, any changes will be carefully considered with input from service users and frontline staff where relevant.

### Impact

- Service quality or responsiveness may be affected if cost reductions lead to reductions in contract scope, or tighter commissioning specifications.
- Delays or disruptions could occur during transitions to new suppliers or processes, particularly where services are complex or involve multiple stakeholders.

### Risk Mitigation

- All savings initiatives will be reviewed through an equality and service impact lens to ensure that changes do not disproportionately affect vulnerable residents.
- Engagement with service users and front-line staff will be built into the commissioning cycle where relevant, particularly where there is a change to service delivery models.
- Where changes affect grant recipients or community organisations, impact assessments and transition plans will be developed to avoid service gaps and maintain continuity. All work will align with development work happening in parallel to review capacity building support required to enable resilient and effective VCS in the borough via Embrace Change Portfolio

### Opportunities

- By reducing inefficiency and focusing on value, the Council can free up resources to invest in areas that directly benefit users, such as improved service integration or digital access.
- Improved oversight and contract management may lead to better quality and consistency in commissioned services.

### Key risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Reducing third party spend will require services to pull in the same direction and be open to challenging suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with contract managers and a 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' approach.</li> <li>• Clear communication from senior managers to contract managers that third party spend reviews are a priority for the Council.</li> </ul>
Procurement data quality and availability has been challenging during proposal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with procurement data team with clear ask on data on top suppliers and tail spend.</li> <li>• Data requests to come directly from Director for Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement to expedite</li> </ul>

	analysis.
Charging overheads on grants may disincentivise local organisations or reduce service delivery capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly the rationale — that overheads cover legitimate support costs (e.g. safeguarding, finance, legal).</li> <li>• Consider tiered or capped charges to avoid disproportionate impact on smaller organisations.</li> </ul>
Reduction in tail spend limits flexibility for urgent or low-value needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce streamlined processes (e.g. dynamic purchasing systems or pre-approved catalogues) to preserve agility while reducing unmanaged spend.</li> <li>• Set a minimum spend threshold for intervention to avoid over-burdening low-risk purchases.</li> </ul>
Supplier relationships are impacted by negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise strategic supplier engagement alongside savings efforts.</li> <li>• Focus on value, not just price — e.g. through contract consolidation or improved performance metrics.</li> </ul>
Contract and supplier management capacity / skills limit the effectiveness of negotiation to release efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing staff with effective skills and capability, conducting contract reviews and robust negotiation strategies will all lead to cash release savings and improved supplier performance. This will involve commercial and contract management skills development and knowledge transfer of contract management – improving capacity to realise efficiencies and contract savings (link to PIP)</li> </ul>
Capacity to deliver in Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings programmes to be aligned with Procurement Improvement Programme and timetables to reflect recruitment to service</li> </ul>

### **Equality Impact Screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N

<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	-
Deadline:	-

### **Financial considerations**

The savings estimated at £3.071m are based on high-level modelling across several areas of spend. These include a 0.5% reduction in overall third-party expenditure (£1.56m), a 10% reduction in low-value tail spend through improved controls (£600k)



and applying a 1% management overhead to eligible grant funding (£570k). Additional savings are projected from increased use of early payment rebates via Oxygen Finance (£331k).

### **Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Rhodri Rowlands. Director, Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement
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## **Digital Programme Saving Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	CC02 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Cross-council
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	All

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	This proposal supports council-wide digital transformation focused on unlocking productivity, automating low-value tasks and maximising return on previous technology investments. It brings together three key strands – Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) optimisation, Artificial Intelligence (AI) deployment, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) expansion - to drive efficiency, reduce manual workloads, improve productivity, and build a more agile organisation.
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	N/A
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	N/A

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£1,430
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	TBC

### **Proposed savings**

#### **1. ERP Optimisation (Oracle)**

There is significant scope to further optimise the use of Oracle Fusion. This includes streamlining core processes across finance, procurement, and HR by enhancing workflows within the ERP system and leveraging as many solution components as possible to drive efficiencies.

**Target Savings:** £330,000

#### **2. AI Deployment**

Use of technology and AI to automate processes and activity. Building on pilot work, new use cases for AI will be identified, prioritised and delivered with a view to launching into operational efficiency.

**Target Savings:** £450,000

### **3. Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**

Expanding existing RPA programme with each directorate delivering 5 new automations (25 in total). Focus will be on high-volume, rules-based tasks rules-based chasing processes, repetitive processes associated with reporting, transferring cases, documents or data between systems where a conventional systems integration is unfeasible.

**Target Savings:** £650,000

#### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### **Resident Benefits and Service Impact**

- Faster turnaround times for complaints, FOIs, applications, assessments etc
- Quicker and more efficient supplier, procurement and payment processes.
- Reduced errors and duplication from manual input.
- Better targeting of resources to complex or high-need cases.

#### **Implementation resource**

Implementation resource will be required to support this work. There could be economies of scale across delivery resource, this could include programme management, delivery management and business analysis. Continued investment in digital transformation resource will also be required.

#### **Key risks and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Underusing digital tools.	To mitigate this, set clear usage targets, provide comprehensive training, monitor adoption levels, and embed these tools into existing workflows.
AI pilots may not deliver the expected savings.	To reduce this risk, focus on proven use cases such as complaints handling, scale only those initiatives that demonstrate value, and conduct ongoing evaluations to ensure effectiveness.
Challenges in converting efficiencies into to cashable savings	Brent has delivered RPA (automations) and AI pilots to date, but these projects have to date generated efficiencies but not cashable savings. To move this work to cashable savings will require governance, buy-in from relevant service areas (whose budgets the savings will come from) and a structured managed approach to realising benefits.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Capacity constraints in building Robotic Process Automation (RPA) solutions.	This can be mitigated by prioritising high-value automation opportunities and considering the use of shared services or external development partners to increase capacity.
The programme could face delays during execution.	To prevent this, ensure thorough planning during the design phase, allowing adequate time and resources for smooth implementation.
Low organisational buy-in and capacity	Clear leadership commitment and active engagement from service areas (especially around AI and automation)
Dependency on services to realise savings	Realising savings depends on service areas actively using the efficiencies created to release cashable or capacity-based savings. Governance required to avoid double-counting and ensure benefits are realised.
Onboarding of new managed service provider	The success of the ERP optimisation work relies on delivery of a thorough and timely diagnostic to identify actionable optimisation opportunities, including automation and AI use.
Risks of use of AI	Governance processes and policies are already in place. Any use of AI will be considered by Brent's Data Ethics Board to consider any potential implications of use of AI.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	Y
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	Y
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on	N

maternity leave, or new parents.	
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	Y
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	Y
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	Y

EIA required?:	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Tony Afuwape
Deadline:	February 26

### **Financial considerations**

Work is in progress to develop a detailed business case for the delivery of savings. Once completed, savings will need to be allocated to departmental budgets across the council where the savings will be realised. A risk is ensuring that appropriate user cases for ERP, RPA and AI development and that there is a robust process for agreeing benefits and ensuring they translate into cashable savings which will require process change and restructure processes within service areas. Delivery of savings will also require technical, project management and change management capacity and this capacity is being built into the proposal.

### **Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Artificial intelligence tools are powered by data centres, which provide the computational resources necessary for training and deploying AI models. Whilst some data centres are mindful of seeking to mitigate their environmental impact, these spaces do typically have adverse impacts on the environment – particularly with regards to energy usage (and therefore, higher carbon emissions), and the amount of water utilised on the site for cooling purposes. As AI workloads grow, so too does the demand for powerful servers and cooling systems, which contributes to environmental concerns such as higher greenhouse gas emissions and resource usage. However, it's important to note that the tech industry is actively addressing these challenges through a range of sustainability initiatives.

For example, Microsoft has committed to ambitious environmental targets, including aiming for net neutral by end of 2025 and net negative by 2030. By 2050 the aim is to remove all carbon that Microsoft has ever emitted. This includes the compute carbon cost of running AI workloads.

While the perception that 'more AI means more harm' is understandable, the reality is that with responsible management and ongoing innovation, the environmental impact can be significantly reduced. In fact, AI itself is being used to optimise energy use and reduce waste within data centres, making the technology part of the solution as well as the challenge.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Sadie East. Director, Communications Insight and Innovation
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### **Service Efficiency Target Saving Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	CC03 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Cross-Council
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	All

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	The proposal sets a standardised 1% efficiency target across the Council's controllable budget. It is designed to support consistent financial management, with an emphasis on local accountability and value-based practices.
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	N/A
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	N/A

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£3,200
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	N/A

### **Strategic Rationale**

This model promotes a shift from centralised budget control to a more service-led approach to identifying efficiencies. Services will assess core activities to identify low-value areas for simplification, cessation, or redesign. This includes reviewing spending patterns, minimising inefficiencies and duplication, and embedding value-for-money principles across all decision-making.

Distributing savings responsibility across services is intended to increase organisational ownership of financial challenges, enhance resilience for future budget planning, and support the identification of sustainable, service-specific efficiencies. Embedding this approach into routine operations is expected to enable faster implementation and more relevant solutions than a centrally led programme.

This savings model serves as a mechanism for promoting financial discipline and continuous improvement across services. It encourages budget holders to routinely assess spending decisions, increases the use of benchmarking and service comparisons, and embeds value-for-money considerations into service design,

procurement, and delivery. The approach prioritises low-cost, high-impact changes before pursuing large-scale transformation.

### **Approach overview**

A dedicated toolkit will be developed to support Services in identifying and delivering their share of the savings. This resource will outline key efficiency levers, provide practical examples, and offer guidance tailored to service-level contexts.

Collaborative workshops will be convened with the senior leadership representatives to provide constructive support and facilitate creative problem-solving, drawing on cross-service learning, peer reviews, and benchmarking insights from comparative data.

### **Governance and monitoring**

To ensure alignment with existing programmes and to prevent duplication, a strengthened governance and monitoring framework will be applied. A central group will coordinate and challenge service reviews using standard templates, regular checkpoints, and clear accountability. Departments will report progress consistently, with corporate-level scrutiny ensuring alignment with overall savings goals.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

This proposal does not mandate service reductions. Instead, it focuses on improving efficiency to safeguard service outcomes. Services will prioritise protecting frontline delivery, pursue internal efficiencies such as process simplification and contract reviews, and only consider frontline changes following local impact assessments and with SLT oversight. Where reductions are proposed, impacts must be assessed and mitigated through redesign or collaboration.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Inconsistent approaches across services	Use benchmarking, templates and peer challenge to support comparability and fairness
Hidden cuts to frontline services	Require impact assessments and SLT sign-off for any service changes
Lack of monitoring	Monthly financial reporting and clinic outcomes tracked centrally
Fragmented transformation and siloed savings proposals	Three Es Clinics and Change Programme to provide corporate oversight, ensuring read-across and coordination. Mandate cross-service visibility of proposed changes to avoid duplication or conflicting initiatives.
One-off or non-recurring savings reported	Focus on permanent change, not in-year underspends

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate
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adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	<i>TBC - These efficiency savings have yet to be identified. As proposals are put forward, an individual EIA screening will be produced and reviewed as part of the approval process.</i>
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	As Above
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	As Above
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	As Above
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	As Above
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	As Above
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	As Above
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	As Above
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	As Above
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	As Above
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic	As Above

disadvantage.	
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	As Above

EIA required?:	TBC
EIA to be completed by:	Respective service area as appropriate
Deadline:	February 2026

### **Financial considerations**

This proposal introduces a 1% efficiency target across the Council's controllable budget, with an estimated saving of £3.2m in 2026/27. The savings have been modelled based on a proportionate reduction applied consistently across services. The 1% assumption underpinning the savings is considered appropriate and achievable, with governance mechanisms in place to monitor delivery and ensure alignment with strategic priorities.

### **Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Any wider impacts in relation to the council's climate and ecological emergency commitments that may result as a result of proposed service efficiency savings will be assessed on a service-by-service basis.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Darren Armstrong. Deputy Director, Organisational Assurance and Resilience
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### **Workforce Model Saving Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	CC04 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Cross-Council
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	All

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	<p>This proposal supports the Council's ambition to modernise its operating model by establishing a leaner, more agile workforce - one that is structured around clear principles, aligned to demand, and designed to deliver services more efficiently. It aims to address inefficiencies embedded in legacy staffing models, particularly in management structures, administrative functions, agency usage, and vacancy control.</p> <p>This programme forms part of a wider organisational development strategy and offers a major opportunity to reduce cost while improving responsiveness, accountability, and staff deployment.</p>
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	N/A
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	2,624 FTE (2500 headcount)

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£400
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	TBC

### **How Savings Figures Were Reached**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Target Saving (£)</b>	<b>How Saving Was Calculated</b>
<b>1. Agency Spend Reduction</b>	<b>£400,000</b>	Midpoint modelled on a 2–4% reduction on £26.6m agency spend in 2024/25 to bring Brent closer to the London average (£25.3m).

## **Proposed savings**

### **1. Agency Spend Reduction**

Despite previous programmes focusing on reducing agency spend and strong performance compared to other boroughs, the council's agency spend remains high. The current agency staffing contract has been re-tendered with Reed supplying all agency requirements. While some savings may be generated through rebates and improved commercial terms, the greatest opportunity lies in strengthening enforcement, improving internal controls, and investing in recruitment and retention to reduce long-term reliance on temporary staffing. The following actions will deliver this saving:

#### **Enforce Preferred Supplier Frameworks**

- Strictly prohibit off-contract or "off-framework" agency bookings.
- Require all bookings to go through the Reed's management system.
- Introduce automated flagging and exception reporting to reduce non-compliance.
- Align this with clearer communication to budget holders and team managers.

#### **Review and Align Rate Cards**

- Conduct a comprehensive benchmarking review of agency pay rates.
- Engage with regional partners to explore pan-London or sub-regional rate alignment, reducing supplier-driven inflation. Currently in place for social work roles with the London Agreement, with the opportunity to explore this approach across other roles
- Review uplifts or exceptions that may have become business-as-usual.

#### **Strengthen Internal Recruitment and Retention**

- Targeted recruitment campaigns for high agency use roles including interims.
- Improve retention through promoting flexible working, career pathways, and workforce development offers aligned to the People Strategy.

#### **Tighten Internal Processes**

- Leverage existing approval controls - where managers must confirm how the role is being filled and sign-off by Directors and Corporate Directors is required.
- Improve visibility and accountability by continuing quarterly reporting to senior managers and monthly agency dashboards for operational leads.
- Introduce targeted challenges or "deep dives" in high-spend services to drive behavioural change.

**Target Savings: £400,000**

### **2. Vacancy Review and Management**

A proactive review of current and future vacancies to determine if roles need to be filled, reprofiled, or removed will deliver savings

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

- Improved access to frontline services by removing duplication and admin bottlenecks.
- Better service agility as staff are deployed based on real-time demand.
- Reduced delays in service delivery due to overreliance on temporary staff.
- No impact to frontline provision where roles are removed through reallocation, vacancy management, or back-office consolidation.
- The focus is on improving value, not reducing quality.

### **Equality impact screening**

Once agreed it will be important to identify the groups affected by the proposals, although it is anticipated that there will be minimal impact. We will however engage with stakeholders for their insights and develop strategies to mitigate any potential negative effects.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual	N

identity.	
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	-
Deadline:	-

### **Financial considerations**

The savings proposal from agency spend reduction is estimated at £0.4m based on a 2–4% decrease in the Council's 2024/25 agency expenditure of £26.6m. This target reflects a realistic midpoint aimed at bringing Brent closer to the London average.

### **Legal considerations**

The Council's policy and procedures adhered to in relation to all recruitment campaigns ensuring that the established equality diversity and inclusion framework is followed.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Musrat Zaman, Director HR & OD
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### **Income Maximisation Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	CC05 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	All Council services that raise income for fees and charges
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cross-Council

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	This proposal sets out a focused programme to increase and safeguard income through targeted updates to fees and charges, stronger recovery processes, improved payment oversight, and higher collection performance. By updating pricing strategies, enforcing permitted charges, and strengthening post-payment controls, the Council can generate significant additional revenue while ensuring that public funds are protected and used efficiently.
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	N/A
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	N/A

	<b>2025/26</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£500
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	0

### **Evidence and Methodology Behind Savings Estimate**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Target Saving</b>	<b>Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate</b>
<b>Strategic review of fees, charges and traded services</b>	£500k	The saving is based on benchmarking and outcomes from similar reviews in other authorities with additional review needed on Brent The review will focus on income-generating services, apply full cost recovery principles, and develop pricing models and governance tools to support sustainable income growth. The outcome will inform the proposed fees and charges for 26/27.



## **Proposed savings**

### **Strategic review of fees, charges and traded services**

The Council currently operates a range of traded services and chargeable functions, including school services, planning, parking, adult social care, and public protection. However, charging structures have evolved inconsistently, and in many cases:

- Fees are not aligned to full cost recovery.
- Pricing is not benchmarked against market comparators.
- Commercial models (e.g. bundling, premium services) are underdeveloped.
- Many charges are set at service level, leading to fragmentation and limited oversight.

A strategic, council-wide review presents an opportunity to standardise pricing principles, maximise income within legal and policy boundaries, and improve commercial performance across both traded and statutory services.

### **Scope and Focus Areas:**

The review will cover both statutory and discretionary services, focusing initially on the top 10 fees and charges areas. The review will benchmark the charges against other councils, refine the existing charging policy, and develop bespoke tools to support sustainable pricing decisions. A second phase will extend the review to the next 10 service areas, ensuring a consistent and evidence-based approach across the organisation.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### *Resident Impact and Service Outcomes*

The proposed review of fees and charges is designed to align pricing with the actual cost of service delivery while ensuring fairness and transparency for residents. Most changes will focus on standardising charges and bringing them in line with market comparators and policy objectives. To protect the most vulnerable, safeguards such as means-testing and hardship waivers will be built into the charging framework, ensuring that residents on low incomes or facing financial hardship continue to receive the support they need. Additionally, improvements to digital payment systems and clearer communication will enhance the overall user experience, making it easier for residents to understand, access, and manage their payments. The emphasis is on efficiency and recovery as no frontline service reductions are proposed.

### **Key consultations**

To be confirmed following mobilisation.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Capacity pressures across finance, revenues, and operational services may limit the ability to deliver reforms to fees, and traded services particularly where teams are supporting both business-as-usual and change activity.	Phase implementation timelines realistically, prioritise resource allocation through a central programme board, and consider short-term capacity support (e.g. external project management) to prevent delivery bottlenecks.
There may be political or public resistance to the introduction of new charges	To mitigate this, conduct benchmarking against other authorities to provide context, communicate clearly about the reasons and intended outcomes of the charges, and design exemptions or discounts for vulnerable groups to maintain fairness and public trust.
Traded services may be under-priced, resulting in lost income or unsustainable operations.	To avoid this, conduct early-stage cost-benefit analysis and market research to ensure that pricing structures reflect the full cost of service delivery while remaining competitive and attractive to customers. Reviewing alternative service delivery models for underperforming offers.
Issues with data accuracy and weak governance could undermine decision-making and service performance.	This risk can be reduced by strengthening data oversight and introducing regular monitoring and validation processes to ensure the integrity, consistency, and reliability of data used across the organisation.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N

<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

### **Financial considerations**

The financial impact of this proposal is estimated at £500k savings, based on benchmarking and outcomes from similar reviews undertaken in other local authorities. As the review progresses, detailed allocations of savings across individual service areas will be scoped and refined. This will be informed by service-level analysis, cost recovery assessments, and market comparisons.

### **Legal considerations**

A more detailed understanding of the fees and charges that will be targeted however the Local Government Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") introduced a general power to charge for the provision of any discretionary service. The discretionary charging powers do not apply to services which an authority is mandated or has a duty to provide. However, councils can charge for discretionary services (that is, services they have power to provide but are not obliged or have a duty to provide by law). The 2003 Act power cannot be used where charging is prohibited or where another specific charging regime applies. Charging is limited to cost recovery and statutory guidance published

in 2003.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

The proposal suggests a potential review of parking charges, including emissions-based pricing and enforcement fees. Environmental sustainability implications in relation to the council's climate goals should be considered as part of this review process.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Rav Jassar. Deputy Director, Corporate and Financial Planning
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### **Resident Experience Channel Shift Saving Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	CC06 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Cross-Council
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Promise Knight, Cabinet Member Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	<p>This proposal will deliver overall improvements to the customer experience whilst reducing the costs of handling customer interactions. It will focus on three key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Channel shift – further improving the online experience to ensure that those that can digitally self-serve are able to do so easily, making digital the channel of choice for many council interactions, particularly those that are simple or transactional.</li> <li>2) Reducing failure demand – improving and simplifying the customer journey by focusing on getting things right first time. This strand will focus on redesigning key processes and customer journeys across different services to reduce avoidable and repeat contact.</li> <li>3) Developing a strategic front door – simplifying and ensuring consistency across the different routes into the council for residents, in particular providing a joined-up person centred front door for residents with vulnerabilities or more complex needs.</li> </ol> <p>These three areas of focus will be underpinned overall by data, evidence and customer insight.</p> <p>The programme will also maximise return on investment in digital infrastructure that the council has already made, such as re-platforming the website, upgrading contact centre infrastructure, and launching self-serve tools.</p>
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	This is a cross-council programme

<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	N/A
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	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£655
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction:</b>	TBC

### **Proposed Savings:**

The savings identified are estimates, based on work undertaken in other councils and on the current understanding of customer contact. A detailed business case is in development and this will provide a greater degree of certainty in relation to the level savings proposed.

#### **1. Channel Shift and self-service**

For those that can, self-serve should be the channel of choice. This will be achieved through a number of distinct, but complementary, approaches. High volume email communication will be replaced by structured, automated webforms for common reports and questions. The ongoing development of My Account will enable residents to have more access to information regarding their interactions with the council. Ongoing improvements to the website (including chatbots) and omni-channel communications (including for example texts or social media) will provide resident with simple and intuitive ways to find information and make requests, carry out simple transactions. And finally reviews of the council's telephony routing and messaging and written communications will be reviewed to ensure alignment.

#### **2. Reducing failure demand and developing the strategic front door.**

The council has already invested in the tools to enhance the customer experience such as the council's telephony system and CRM (customer relationship management) system. There is significant opportunity to now capitalise on this investment by developing the use of these tools and others to ensure that customers with more complex needs are able to access person-centred, joined up support and that the need for repeat contact or avoidable contact (such as need to follow up on a referral, needing to repeat the same information to different teams, etc) can be reduced. Improved use of the tools available can also reduce the need for staff to

rekey information and can provide opportunities for more proactive communication and support with residents. In addition, where there are still multiple routes into the council for different services, these will be reviewed to identify opportunities to streamline customer contact routes and ensure consistency across services.

**Target Savings: £655,000**

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

Residents will experience a more accessible, responsive and reliable service, including:

- An intuitive, easy to use online experience
- Fewer follow-ups, complaints or delays due to clearer communications and streamlined processes and the ability of residents to view progress
- Improved support for vulnerable residents, as some colleague capacity is freed up to focus on proactive, targeted interventions.
- More inclusive services, informed by data on who is and isn't using digital channels and tailored support to address barriers.
- A digital offer that is user tested and iterates resulting in ongoing resident feedback identifying barriers and opportunities for improvements.
- Essential phone and face-to-face support will be preserved for those who need it most, with a stronger person centred offer for those with more complex needs

### **Programme Workstreams and Opportunities**

#### **Workstreams:**

- **Channel Shift:** improving the online experience and increasing digital interactions
- **Failure Demand:** redesigning processes and services to reduce avoidable and repeat contact
- **Strategic Front Door:** developing a joined-up person-centred front door model for those with more complex needs

#### **Implementation resource**

Implementation resource will be required to support this work. This is likely to include programme management, delivery management and business analysis resource as well as input from subject matter experts within services. Whilst the council has already invested the core technology needed to improve the resident experience, there is likely to be further resource required to develop these tools. This may include specialist support from system providers. In addition, there is likely to be further investment needed in orchestrating resident data in a way that enables more streamlined and proactive interaction.

## **Inter-dependencies with other proposals**

It is likely that there will be some cross-over with the digital programme proposal as increased automation will be required to fully digitise and improve some resident journeys.

It is also anticipated that as the strategic front door model is developed there will be opportunities to consider how this can complement or directly contribute to the council's Radical Place Leadership approach.

## **Key consultations**

Where existing posts and structures are affected by the proposal, consultation with staff will need to be carried out according to the Council's policy and procedures.

Whilst formal consultation with residents will not be required, less formal engagement, user experience testing and co-creation with residents will ensure that services are designed with the residents who will use them in mind, responding to data, insight and resident feedback.

## **Key risks and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Low uptake of digital services	Applying user-centred design principles and behavioural insights, improve usability, and conduct targeted engagement and campaigns to promote adoption.
Technology gaps or delays	Undertake technology design phase, early engagement with technical resource, phased delivery approach.
Understanding our customers and what their barriers to digital and current experiences are	By working with partners and involving residents through user testing and co-production activities we will be able to ensure the resident perspective and experience is integral to the design of new tools and processes. This should be supplemented with data and insight wherever possible.
Programme execution delays	To prevent this, ensure thorough planning during the design phase, allowing adequate time and resources for smooth implementation.
Dependency on services to realise savings	Realising some savings will depend on service areas, particularly those with customer facing functions, actively using the efficiencies created to release cashable or capacity-based savings. Strong governance will be required to ensure savings are realised and to avoid double-counting.
Low organisational buy-in and capacity	Clear leadership commitment and active engagement from service areas (especially where the customer journey crosses multiple services)

## **Equality Impact Screening**



Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	Y
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	Y
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	Y
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	Y
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	Y

EIA required?:	Y
EIA to be completed by:	Latoya Phillips

Deadline:	01/12/25
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### **Financial considerations**

Work is in progress to develop a detailed business case for the delivery of savings. Once completed, savings will need to be allocated to departmental budgets across the council where the savings will be realised. To manage risk in relation to savings delivery, a robust process will need to be in place for agreeing benefits and ensuring they translate into cashable savings. This will require process change and potentially restructure processes within service areas. Delivery of savings will also require technical, project management and change management capacity.

### **Legal considerations**

This programme of work will result in staffing reductions. The final business case will identify the services affected. Restructures will need to follow the council's policies and procedures.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

Initial screening has identified that an Equality Analysis will need to be completed. There is the potential for both positive and negative impacts of the proposal, particularly for people with disabilities, for people on lower incomes and for those for whom English is not their first language. The programme will include user engagement and co-production aimed at maximising potential positive benefits and mitigating any potential negative impact.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Physical natural resource usage (i.e. printing of letters to residents) is expected to decrease with enhanced digitisation of functions. There is likely to be a small associated reduction in related emissions. However, increasing the use of digital tools may increase energy consumption associated with data storage and the use of electronic devices. Therefore, the overall proposal is anticipated to have a neutral effect on climate change or the environment.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Kirsteen Roe, Interim Director for Resident Services
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### **Lane Rental Scheme Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	NR01 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Highways Management
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Krupa Sheth

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	Lane Rental Scheme (LRS)
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	£2,845
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	30

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£350
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	0

### **Proposed savings**

£350k from the implementation of a Lane Rental Scheme to levy charges on works conducted on busy roads during peak hours. Charges can reach up to £2,500 per day, aimed at discouraging roadworks at critical times. Brent wishes to secure the option to implement a pan-London framework similar to an existing TfL scheme, with slight operational differences, including charges and the schedule of operational times.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

Brent Council is exploring the adoption of a Lane Rental Scheme (LRS) to manage street works more efficiently on its busiest roads. This initiative builds upon the National Permit Scheme, which already provides some level of control over street works by Local Authorities and utility undertakers. A Lane Rental Scheme, currently operational on Transport for London's (TfL) road network, is designed to reduce traffic delays, improve contractor behaviour, and promote innovation, aligning with the Traffic Management Act 2004's network management duties.

Brent's road network could be classified into bands high, medium, and low, determining the applicable charges and operational hours for works. If works are

carried out outside operational hours, no charges will apply. A balanced approach will be adopted to ensure that charges for utility and Council-maintained roadworks are aligned. For Brent's own maintenance works, the Council will adopt a procedure to ensure fairness, such as offsetting any charges against maintenance budgets and redistributing a portion of the income for reinvestment in road infrastructure.

The scheme can offer several exemptions: such as for emergency works, works with minimal disruption, or replacement of poles and lamp columns. There are also potential reductions in charges for collaborative works and major infrastructure improvements.

The financial implications are significant, with a potential first half year net annual income of approximately £350k after costs.

The scheme operates under the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA), with legal provisions for charges based on the duration of works. The Council's participation in the scheme would support better coordination, reduce congestion, and facilitate more efficient road network management, benefiting both the local community and contractors.

A study should be commissioned via consultants to prepare options for the scheme, in terms of different sizes of network to which a scheme could apply, and options for the exemptions and discounts. Likely levels of income for each option will be calculated, and the likely resource levels to run the scheme determined.

### **Key consultations**

- TfL
- Utility providers
- DFT
- Elected Members

### **Key risks and mitigations**

- **Delays in application, consultation and implementation stages due to resistance from utility providers**  
Full and detailed consultation with collaborative negotiation to include exploration of appropriate and reasonable exemptions. The scheme options would have to be in accordance with the regulations and be compatible with the Pan-London Scheme which is being promoted by TfL.
- **Investment costs exceed those anticipated and /or options fail to generate expected income**  
Sensitivity analysis of network size will be tested to ensure optimal benefit realisation.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please

indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

### **Financial considerations**

Modelling has indicated an anticipated half year income of circa £350k for 26/27 and an equivalent full year saving in future years of £700k. Operational costs can be deducted from the income from the Lane Rental Scheme. Additional coordination and inspections would be required if the scheme were to be adopted, so operational costs can include the funding for increasing team capacity.

50% of the surplus income from Lane Rental must be reinvested in our road network including potholes giving additional benefit other than reduced congestion.

The surplus funds can also be used for innovation and traffic disruption reduction, software development, rapid deployment cameras for long duration works, fixed CCTV for remote site monitoring from the office and extraordinary measures such as reconfiguring the road network.

### **Legal considerations**

Implementing a lane rental scheme in London involves several legal and regulatory considerations, primarily governed by UK transport and highways law. Lane rental schemes allow highway authorities to charge utilities and other companies for occupying the road network, particularly when roadworks disrupt traffic. Here are the main legal considerations and the relevant legislation:

Primary Legislation to enable the lane rental scheme includes:

*New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)*

- Section 74 enables the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring undertakers executing street works to pay a charge to the highway authority where
  - The duration of the works exceeds a prescribed period; and
  - The works are not completed in a reasonable period
- Section 74A Enables the Secretary of State to make regulations allowing highway authorities to impose charges for street works during certain periods (e.g., peak hours).

*Traffic Management Act 2004*

- Places a network management duty on local authorities (including Transport for London) to secure the expeditious movement of traffic.
- Section 16: Requires the local traffic authority to manage their road networks effectively, which supports the justification for lane rental schemes.

The Street Works (Charges for Unreasonably Prolonged Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulations 2009 (SI 2009/303) enable the use of Section 74 of NRSWA and set out the relevant prescribed periods and charges that will be applicable.

Regulations to enable the lane rental scheme includes Street Works (Charges for Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulations 2012, which are made under section 74A of NRSWA 1991, and provides the framework for authorities in England (including London boroughs and TfL) to apply to the Secretary of State for permission to run a lane rental scheme.

Key Provisions are that only certain authorities can apply to operate a lane rental scheme; scheme proposals must be approved by the Secretary of State for Transport, and charges can only be made for specific parts of the network and at specific times.

A local authority (e.g., Transport for London) must submit a detailed scheme for approval. It must include:

- Justification for the scheme.
- Proposed charging mechanisms.
- Consultation outcomes.
- Provisions for exemptions and discounts.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are several climate change and environmental considerations in implementing a lane rental scheme like Transport for London's (TfL):

- **Reduced Emissions:** By encouraging utility companies to complete roadworks more quickly or during off-peak times, lane rental schemes can reduce traffic congestion and idling, which in turn lowers vehicle emissions and improves air quality.
- **Improved Traffic Flow:** Smoother traffic flow means fewer stop-start conditions, leading to better fuel efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Behavioural Change:** The scheme can incentivize companies to use less invasive or more sustainable methods for roadworks, such as trenchless technology.
- **Support for Active Travel:** Fewer and shorter disruptions can encourage walking and cycling by maintaining access to safe and clear routes.

### **Communication considerations**

Key communications considerations if the London Borough of Brent implemented a lane rental scheme like TfL's:

- **Public Awareness:** Clear communication to residents and drivers about how the scheme works, its benefits, and how it may affect them.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Early and ongoing engagement with utility companies, contractors, local businesses, and transport operators to ensure buy-in and cooperation.
- **Transparency:** Regular updates on how funds from the scheme are used, especially if they support local transport or environmental projects.
- **Crisis Communication:** A plan for managing complaints, disruptions, or negative feedback during initial rollout or major roadworks.
- **Multichannel Messaging:** Use of local media, social media, signage, and council

communications to reach diverse audiences effectively.

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte. Director, Public Realm
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### **Asset Utilisation Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	NR02 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Teo Benea

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	<p>This programme seeks to increase net revenue by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Optimising off-street parking through market aligned tariffs and digital booking system(s);</li> <li>2) Commercialising Parks assets where financially sustainable and aligned to public health outcomes.</li> </ol>
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	n/a
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	n/a

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£190
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	N/A
<b>Proposed Capital Receipt:</b>	N/A

### **Proposed savings**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Target Saving</b>	<b>Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate</b>
<b>1. Review the parking policy to align off-street parking charges with market and set context for income generating opportunities.</b>	£60k	<p>Align off-street parking charges with market, enabling income generating options.</p> <p>Target: £0.06m recurring from FY 2026/27  Method: A comprehensive review is being carried out on the off-street car-park portfolio to prepare site options.  The findings from the review will help inform piloting of a car park payment booking system and development of a new parking policy.</p>

Opportunity	Target Saving	Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate
<b>2. Review Parks assets to identify financially sustainable improvements to parks that encourage community wellbeing and increased activity</b>	£130k	<p>Parks commercialisation (site specific business cases)</p> <p>Target: £0.13m recurring from court bookings</p> <p>Method: Per-site feasibility (planning, design, costs, delivery model), community engagement and operator options (self-manage vs partner concession). We will present the net revenue after any capital investment, staffing, maintenance, utilities, sinking fund, and operator shares have been considered as part of developing site-specific business cases.</p>

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### **Resident Impact and Service Outcomes**

- Aligning off-street car park fees and charges with market rates may potentially result in residents having to pay more to use the Council's off-street car parks.
- Investment in our parks assets to provide facilities such as Padel Court provision will help achieve public health outcomes and diversify what our parks can offer to residents.

### **Key consultations**

An initial list of stakeholders has been highlighted below, and the consultation plan(s) will need to be tailored for each opportunity that has been identified.

- Cabinet/Lead Members
- Ward Councillors
- Residents
- SLT / SMG
- Communities/Friends of groups
- Sport England
- Private market

### **Key risks and mitigations**

Risk	Mitigation
Resource pressures across the Council may limit the speed at which opportunities can be progressed.	<p>Identify lead officer(s) at SMG level for each opportunity.</p> <p>Prioritise resource allocation through a central programme board and consider</p>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
	short-term capacity support (e.g. external project management) to prevent delivery bottlenecks.
Potential resistance to the introduction of new charges and/or the change of use(s) within our parks.	To mitigate this, conduct benchmarking against other authorities to provide context, communicate clearly about the reasons and intended outcomes of the charges, and consider exemptions or discounts for vulnerable groups.
The council may not have sufficient capabilities and/or the private operator market is mature enough to manage/operate a sustainable playing facilities.	To mitigate this, invest/recruit appropriately skilled staff to manage this service provision or procure a delivery partner to manage new facilities as an 'arms-length' operation from the Council.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N

<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	n/a
Deadline:	n/a

### **Financial considerations**

A review of off-street parking charges is expected to generate a £60k saving, based on aligning fees with market rates and exploring new payment and booking systems. Additionally, a parks asset review is projected to deliver £130k through increased court bookings, supported by site-specific business cases that account for capital investment, operating costs, and partnership models. These estimates are based on early feasibility work and reflect prudent assumptions pending further development and engagement.

### **Legal considerations**

Any increase to fees and charges as set out above will require Cabinet approval. If approved by Cabinet, an Order pursuant to S35(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 is required to give notice of any changes in rates for Off-Street Parking. This will include a statutory consultation before making the Order and once made it will be subject to a six-week legal challenge period.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as part of bringing forward any specific proposals relating to the parking policy review and/or playing facilities investment in our parks.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani. Director, Property and Assets
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### **Subsidy Loss Reduction Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	PHRS01 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Housing Benefit, Housing Needs, Adult Social Care
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Lead Member for Housing

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	Reduction in Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA) subsidy loss
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	1,800 (Current forecast for 2025/26)
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	0

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£130
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	0

### **Proposed savings**

Supported exempt accommodation is a type of supported accommodation. It is exempt from locally set caps on housing benefit in recognition of the higher housing management costs that can accompany supported accommodation. Legally, SEA can only be provided by a county council, Housing Association, registered charity, or voluntary organisation.

Under current arrangements, if the SEA provider is not a registered provider, the Council experiences a gap in housing benefits subsidy received from DWP of 40% above rent officer determination for particular vulnerable groups, and 100% above this determination for other residents. This gap needs to be covered by the Council. Housing Benefit subsidy loss associated with SEA in 2024/25 was £3.95m, linked to 654 placements. In 2024/25, this was funded from council reserves.

In many cases, current non-commissioned supported exempt accommodation (SEA) provision in Brent neither represents value for money to the council or DWP, nor good quality care, support, or supervision for residents. Many of these residents originate with the council, either with adult social care or housing needs.

The council may not provide SEA, legally. However, the Council is considering using one of its subsidiaries to provide SEA and therefore reclaim the full costs from DWP.

Officers are therefore proposing to transform the delivery model for future referrals in the housing needs cohort. This should improve outcomes for residents, preventing them from needing to reapproach the council as homeless or in need of social care (i.e. demand management), and supporting residents back into independent living.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

This proposal should improve the quality of care, support, and supervision received by residents. It should do more to support residents into independent living and represent an improvement upon the reasonably poor quality of care, support, and supervision that some providers currently provide.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The Council would need to work with landlords that are already providing SEA, moving them away from their current SEA provider.	could focus on working with landlords where lease agreements are up for renewal, or where landlords have agreements with providers that fail Brent's review/licensing scheme.
This proposal drives savings by shifting costs to DWP, which may strain LBB's relationship with DWP.	Many other local authorities have achieved savings by shifting costs to DWP. Moreover, the modelled additional costs to DWP appear very reasonable given the additional work the council has already done to reduce the number of accepted SEA referrals.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and	N

mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	-
Deadline:	-

### **Financial considerations**

The Council experienced a £4m loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy in 2024/25 and is forecast to lose £1.8m in 2025/26.

Provided the new provider is able to procure properties, including taking on the responsibility for care, support and supervision, and demonstrate compliance with DWP subsidy regulations, the Housing Benefit Subsidy loss the Council is currently facing can be avoided.

### **Legal considerations**

To act as a provider for SEA, in which the Council could fully recover housing benefit subsidy, the provider must be a registered provider of social housing.

To meet SEA requirements, the provider would be contractually obligated to provide a more than minimal level of care, support and supervision (CSS) in its occupational agreement.

Under s.189A of the Housing Act 1996 Brent must undertake a detailed housing needs assessment to support referrals for SEA and provide evidence of the CSS requirement.

Provided the provider leases properties from private landlords for SEA and the rents are set at local SEA market rates, the council should be able to reclaim the full amount as Housing Benefit. CSS costs are not eligible for subsidy under Housing Benefit and must be covered separately either by the resident or the Council, or a combination of both.

The provider should lease properties for SEA for a minimum term of 2 years and a maximum term of 30 years without the use of public funding for acquisition.

Counsel has strongly advised all documentation for the scheme should undergo comprehensive legal review prior to implementation, to mitigate the risk of non-compliance. Overall, there are no substantial legal barriers that would inhibit the progression of the scheme, but due diligence - particularly regarding contracts, compliance and governance - is required to ensure long-term viability.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Laurence Coaker, Director of Housing Needs and Support
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### **Homelessness Prevention Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	PHRS02 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Housing Needs
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Lead Member for Housing

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	Prevention of homelessness – friends and family data insights
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	<b>13.1</b>
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	<b>109</b>

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£200
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	0

### **Proposed savings**

Friend and family evictions accounts for 30% of demand from homeless households. Unlike the other major drivers for homelessness around evictions from privately rented accommodation and domestic abuse, there is more scope to prevent homelessness by identifying the stress factors which contribute to the adult child being evicted from the parental home. These factors may range from financial stress to conflict or overcrowding. This proposal is to use effective 'at risk' indicators, e.g. debt, known to Children's service or other council services to identify families and engage in proactive communication to intervene early to provide tailored support and prevent the exclusion.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

By using data analytics to identify families "at risk" and intervening at an earlier stage and providing the support required to prevent the exclusion, the family will benefit from having the support to address the underlying issues that are having a determinantal impact.

## **Key risks and mitigations**

**Risk** – There is a risk that this may contribute to increased demand, as this proactive approach will mean officers contacting households before they approach the council as homeless. The family may never have approached the council as homeless and if the intervention does not succeed, the applicant is likely to be placed into temporary accommodation.

**Mitigation:** The likelihood is that the family member being excluded would approach the council for assistance, and this approach would be at the point of crisis, diminishing the prospect of a successful intervention to prevent homelessness.

Other Key Risks Include:

- (a) reliance on accurate and timely data to generate alerts;
- (b) operational capacity to act promptly on alerts;
- (c) assumptions around temporary accommodation costs and lengths of stay, which may change;
- (d) the possibility that households do not engage with prevention offers.

Mitigations include strengthened data governance, allocation of dedicated prevention staff, quarterly refresh of financial assumptions and enhanced communication with residents.

## **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N

<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N
<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	-
Deadline:	-

### **Financial considerations**

Based on the forecasts of outcomes it is projected that a yearly saving can be achieved under a central case scenario by adopting a data analytics approach to strengthen Brent's homelessness prevention work. It is important to note that this is anticipated to prevent new demand from arising but does not alleviate the current pressures resulting from existing Stage 1 households in temporary accommodation. If the level of demand next financial year is greater than budgetary expectations, there is a risk that this project could result in cost avoidance rather than a cashable saving.

### **Legal considerations**

The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 requires local authorities to intervene at an earlier stage and take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness (to those threatened with homelessness within 56 days) and/ or relieve homelessness (through sustaining or securing accommodation) for eligible applicants who become homeless or are threatened with homelessness.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Laurence Coaker, Director of Housing Needs and Support
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## **Housing Benefits Claim Reduction Savings Proposal**

<b>Reference:</b>	PHRS03 26-27
<b>Service(s):</b>	Council Tax and Financial Assessments
<b>Lead Member(s):</b>	Cllr Promise Knight, Cabinet Member Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture

<b>Savings Proposal:</b>	Staffing efficiencies within the Council Tax and Financial Assessments due to expected caseload decrease.
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### **Financial and Staffing Information**

<b>2025/26</b>	
<b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>	<b>£2.6m</b>
<b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b>	<b>48</b>

	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000
<b>Proposed saving:</b>	£270
	FTE
<b>Proposed staffing reduction</b>	5

### **Proposed savings**

#### **Background**

Housing Benefits caseload at end of March 2026 is expected to be:

- 9500 HB caseload to remain. This includes Pensioner claims, Supported Exempt Accommodation and Emergency/Temporary Accommodation cases.
- 22, 908 Council tax Support case load to remain (no signs of any further reduction as this is based on the new scheme we have just implemented).

#### **Proposed savings for 2026/27**

- Total savings offered - £0.27m

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

- The Housing Benefit caseload will reduce by 3000 in March 2026
- Efficiencies with IT enhancements including automation

- Service users should not be negatively affected, as we anticipate being left with right level of resources.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

- If caseloads do not reduce by March 2026, this proposal will have to be reconsidered.
- Mitigation is to increase the use of resilience till caseload with new pensioner work settles.
- Assessment teams in all areas are on the same job description allowing us to move resources depending on demand.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:	
<b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.	N
<b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.	N
<b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.	N
<b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender.	N
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.	N
<b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.	N
<b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.	N
<b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.	N
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.	N

<b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.	N
<b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.	N

EIA required?:	No
EIA to be completed by:	-
Deadline:	-

### **Financial considerations**

There are currently 48 members of staff within the Council Tax and Financial Assessments that support Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support caseloads. It is anticipated that by March 2026, the Housing Benefit caseload will reduce by approximately 3,000 cases and that staffing resource required to support this function will be able to be reduced by 5 FTEs. The associated saving is estimated to be £0.27m.

### **Legal considerations**

This programme of work will result in staffing reductions. The final business case will identify the services affected. Restructures will need to follow the council's policies and procedures.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

None directly for staff or residents, but once case approved, there may be work to be undertaken.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

Lead officer for this proposal:	Kirsteen Roe, Interim Director for Resident Services
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