



# Agenda

## Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 29 November 2016 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber - Town Hall

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### Membership (Quorum – 3 )

Cllrs Mrs McKinlay (Chair), Kerlake (Vice-Chair), Barrett, Faragher, Hossack, Kendall, McCheyne, Mynott and Parker

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Agenda Item	Item	Wards(s) Affected	Page No
1.	Apologies for Absence		
2.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting		5 - 8
3.	Council Tax Support scheme - 2017/18	All Wards	9 - 26
4.	Transfer of Housing Revenue Account Shops (HRA) to General Fund	All Wards	27 - 32
5.	Budget Monitoring Mid Year Review and Medium Term Financial Plan Report to follow.	All Wards	
6.	Procurement Strategy - 2016 to 2019	All Wards	33 - 44

7. **Urgent Business**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. L. R. B.', with a large, sweeping underline stroke.

Head of Paid Service

Town Hall  
Brentwood, Essex  
21.11.2016

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### Information for Members

#### Substitutes

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The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Where substitution is permitted, substitutes for quasi judicial/regulatory committees must be drawn from Members who have received training in quasi- judicial/regulatory decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial/regulatory committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

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#### Rights to Attend and Speak

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Any Members may attend any Committee to which these procedure rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the Committee may speak at the meeting. The Member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a Member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

Members requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting.

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#### Point of Order/ Personal explanation/ Point of Information

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##### Point of Order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Mayor will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Mayor on the point of order will be final.

##### Personal Explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

##### Point of Information or clarification

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Mayor. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate, If the Mayor gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

## Information for Members of the Public

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Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to make recordings, these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

If you wish to record the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment then please contact the Communications Team before the meeting.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

### **Private Session**

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss some of its business in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a Committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

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### **Access**

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### **Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point in the North Front Car Park.



## Minutes

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### Policy, Finance and Resources Committee Tuesday, 20th September, 2016

#### Attendance

Cllr Mrs McKinlay (Chair)	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Kerlake (Vice-Chair)	Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Faragher	Cllr Parker
Cllr Hossack	

#### Also Present

Cllr Cloke  
Cllr Mrs Pound

#### Officers Present

Greg Campbell	-	Project Manager - Customer Transformation
Philip Drane	-	Planning Policy Team Leader
Tim Huggins	-	ICT Manager
Chris Pickering	-	Principal Solicitor
Ramesh Prashar	-	Interim Section 151 Officer
Philip Ruck	-	Chief Executive
Jean Sharp	-	Governance and Member Support Officer

#### 160. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

#### 161. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 June 2016 were approved as a true record.

#### 162. Council Restructure

The report requested the approval of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee to allow the Chief Executive to conduct and implement restructures in service areas of the Council. Whilst the Council's Organisational Change Policy made it clear that approval was not sought from Members in relation to the service areas under review, it was important that

Members were aware of the potential changes to the way in which services were delivered prior to any restructuring being carried out.

The areas under consideration for restructure were:

- a. Senior Management Team, also known as the Corporate Leadership Board
- b. Planning
- c. Housing

If agreed the proposed restructures would be in place by 30 November 2016.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report with some additional wording and following a discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. **That the restructures in the service areas as defined in 1.2 of the report proceeded in accordance with the Council's adopted policies and procedures.**
2. **That the Chief Executive would be granted delegated authority to undertake, manage and implement the said restructures provided that the consultation took place with the Leaders of all political groups (or in their absence, their appointed deputies) and the Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee and the Chair of Environment and Housing Management Committee. Such consultation would include meetings with the said Leaders and Chairs and would include advice as to progress.**

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

To enable the Council to align its available resources with its service delivery model.

### **163. Key Projects Update**

The report provided the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee with an update on the achievements and targets to date of the key corporate projects of the Council. These are currently defined as:

- a. The Town Hall and Service Delivery Hub
- b. The Local Development Plan (LDP)
- c. The Town Centre (incorporating William Hunter Way)
- d. The Transformation Agenda of the Council

The above was not an exhaustive list and other projects might be incorporated as determined by the committee. However, such projects were defined as being integral to the delivery of the revised Corporate Plan 2016-2019.

Officers provided further detailed updates on the projects listed above and responded to Members' questions.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerlake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report. Following a discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Members agreed to the actions and timescales incorporated in the report.**

#### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

To ensure that the Corporate Plan 2016-2019 was supported by projects that delivered the necessary change.

#### **164. South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP)**

The report requested the approval of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee to allow the Chief Executive to extend the current Operational period of the South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP) by four years to 31 March 2022.

The report detailed clearly the requirements that were set out within the Joint Committee Agreement that related to a possible extension, explained the Partnership Reviews that had taken place and set out the financial case demonstrating that SEPP could become self-sufficient throughout the four year extension period.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerlake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report.

Cllr Mynott **MOVED** and Cllr Kendall **SECONDED** an **AMENDMENT** to the recommendation: "to defer consideration of the extension of the operational period of the South Essex Parking Partnership for discussion at the 19 October Ordinary Council meeting".

A vote was taken on a show of hands and the **AMENDMENT** was **LOST**.

Returning to the substantive motion, following a discussion, a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Chief Executive be granted authority to extend the current operational period of the South Essex Parking Partnership by four years to 31 March 2022.**

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

To enable the Council to continue to operate with SEPP.

**165. Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.





**29 November 2016**

**Policy, Finance and Resources Committee**

**Council Tax Support scheme - 2017/18**

**Report of:** *Rob Manser - Shared Services Revenues & Benefits Manager*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report recommends no changes to be made to Brentwood's Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2017/18.
- 1.2 People of pension age continue to be protected from any changes in Local Council Tax Support; therefore any scheme has to be devised for people of working age only.
- 1.3 Public consultation on revised scheme options was undertaken from 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016.
- 1.4 The Brentwood Borough Council scheme continues to be prepared within the framework of an Essex-wide scheme with local variations. For the last three years Brentwood's scheme has remained virtually unchanged, we are again not proposing any changes to the 2017/18 scheme.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To approve Brentwood's Council Tax Support Scheme with no changes to the levels of support for working age customers**

## **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 Council Tax Support (CTS) replaced Council Tax Benefit in April 2013. Each authority must adopt a Council Tax Scheme each year by the 31<sup>st</sup> January, or the previous year's scheme will continue.
- 3.2 Brentwood's Ordinary Council has approved and adopted a Council Tax Support scheme for each subsequent year.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The Local Council Tax Support scheme is designed to ensure, as far as possible, stability and sustainability in the Council's finances.
- 4.2 Since 2014/15 the government have not published separate figures for LCTS within the annual LGF settlement. It is now deliberately a matter for local discretion by the Billing Authority, along with other general fund demand for services. The funding to local authorities in 2017/18 will also be affected by the Spending Review and at the time of writing this report, the Spending Review has yet to be determined.
- 4.3 Whatever funding is made available, it is important to note that it was never intended to be ring-fenced. Council Tax support was localised in 2013/14 deliberately to free authorities to set their own schemes having regard to the competing demands of other General Fund services within the totality of the funding resources available to them.
- 4.4 The elements of Brentwood's local scheme have been substantially unchanged since 2014/15. The reducing cost of the scheme is due to changes in the number of claimants and in the mix between pensioner and working age claimants. Such changes reflect local demographics, rates of unemployment and other factors. This is a demand-led service and demand – and costs – can go up as well as down. The above costs do not reflect the costs of non-collection (write-offs of uncollected council tax).
- 4.5 An analysis of the Revenues database shows that our current scheme has not adversely affected our levels of Council Tax collection, which remain as expected and on target when compare to previous years.
- 4.6 Whilst the 2016/17 scheme is having little to no effect on collection rates, the collection fund could suffer from 2017/18 onwards when Government initiatives such as Universal Credit and the Benefit Cap are rolled out further.
- 4.7 It is estimated that by the end of 2016/17, under the current scheme:
- 92% LCTS working aged customers will have paid in full or made an arrangement to pay
  - 8% LCTS working aged customers will not have paid in full and will be in arrears with their council tax.
- 4.8 If the Council decides not to adopt the proposed 2017/18 scheme then the scheme that is currently in place for 2016/17, our current scheme, becomes our default scheme.

## **5 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 To agree and adopt the proposed Council Tax Support scheme for 2017/18 prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

## **6 Consultation**

- 6.1 Consultation commenced on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and completed on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

- 6.2 With the other Essex billing authorities and ECC, it was agreed that, during the public consultation period, each billing authority would publish their draft scheme on their individual websites with a link for responses to ECC (who have the necessary consultation software). People who do not have access to the internet or who wished to give a more detailed response were able to do so directly to the relevant billing authority. In addition to information on the website 1,000 customers written to or sent text messages by the Service during the consultation period, explaining the reason for the consultation and how to respond.

- 6.3 A total of 38 responses to Brentwood's consultation were received, of which 24% were from current recipients of Council Tax Support. Whilst this was a limited response, it was similar with the consultation held last year and mirrored the levels of most responses received across Essex. Of these responses there was general agreement to the main principles of the scheme.

- 29% of customers agreed that any shortfall in Council funding should be met by an increase in Council Tax for all tax payers;
- 23% of customers agreed that any shortfall in Council funding should be met by a reduction in funding to other services;
- 50% of those customers who responded agreed that any shortfall in Council funding should not be met from changing the maximum percentage of LCTS award
- 57% of customers agreed that every working aged person should have to make a payment towards their Council Tax;

Overall, the response to the consultation did not highlight any issues that would give cause to alter the proposed scheme.

## **7 Legislation/Policy**

- 7.1 Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992 (as amended) states;

- 7.2 "For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme."

- 7.3 Schedule 13A of the same Act gives billing authorities power to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable:

- 1) Where a person is liable to pay council tax in respect of any chargeable dwelling and any day, the billing authority for the area in which the dwelling is situated may reduce the amount which he is liable to pay as respects the dwelling and the day to such extent as it thinks fit.
- 2) The power under subsection (1) above includes power to reduce an amount to nil.
- 3) The power under subsection (1) may be exercised in relation to particular cases or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced to an extent provided by the determination.

7.4 The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 determine the principles on which local schemes are to operate.

## **8 Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar - Financial Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312513/ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk**

8.1 There are no financial implications from the introduction of the LCTS technical changes which will be funded from within existing scheme resources.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Saleem Chughtai, Legal Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500/saleem.chughtai@bdtlegal.org.uk**

8.2 The CTS Scheme is subject to the Council's duties for local welfare support under primary and secondary legislation including The Welfare Reform Act 2012, the Council Tax Reduction Schemes(Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012. In addition the Council takes account of guidance published by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

8.3 Equality Impact and Consultation response attached.

**9. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

9.2 Background papers are held by the Revenues & Benefits service

**10. Appendices to this report**

Appendix A - Equality Impact and Consultation response

Appendix B – LCTS 2017-2018 Risk Management Implications.

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Rob Manser – Shared Services Revenues & Benefits Manager

**Telephone:** 01277 312855

**E-mail:** [rob.manser@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:rob.manser@brentwood.gov.uk)

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# Council Tax Support - 2017/18

Brentwood Borough Councils Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme  
Final Scheme Design  
Consultation Response



This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is based on the financial models adopted for consultation by Brentwood Borough Council. An impact assessment of the change to local support for Council Tax nationwide can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/localising-support-for-council-tax>

## **Proposed changes**

The Council proposes the following changes:

- None

## **Reason for the service change**

Brentwood Borough Council's replacement to Council Tax Benefit is now established and will be entering its 4<sup>th</sup> year of operation. It is now at steady state and the Council is seeking to ensure our scheme meets the needs of taxpayers, recipients and partner organisations.

Section 13 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 was amended by the Welfare Reform Act which allows for the development of a new Localised Council Tax Support scheme to be implemented.

Every billing authority in England must design a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable in respect of dwellings in its area.

Council Tax Support is funded through reductions in the Council Tax base. As a result the costs of Council Tax Support are shared proportionately by the billing authority and the preceptors.

Essex County Council faces the largest share of the scheme cost. Agreement with Essex and the preceptors is that the scheme will cost the same or less than the grant allocated for 2013/14. This arrangement continues until 2016/17. In 2017/18 it was agreed with preceptors to maintain current scheme costs provided action is taken to control the costs of all discounts and exemptions, including CTR.

## **Information about the changes - locally**

The Council is in a partnership with Essex County Council to control the costs of discounts and exemptions within the Council Tax collection Fund. This ensures that local taxpayers are not unduly burdened by excessive reductions in the Council Tax Base. Part of that agreement is to ensure that the Cost of Council Tax Support is "cost neutral" when compared the 2013/14 funding allocation for Council Tax Support.



Locally Brentwood Borough Council has delivered a Council Tax Support scheme that has:-

- Been seen to be fair
- Not impacted upon the collection of Council Tax.
- Not needed significant redesign
- Stood up well to appeal and national scrutiny

## **Information about the changes - nationally**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have completed an Impact Assessment for the implementation of local support for Council Tax nationwide;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/localising-support-for-council-tax>

## **Nature of the consultation**

The Council consulted staff in the Housing and Revenues & Benefits services. The Council has worked with other authorities throughout Essex and Essex County Council to monitor the costs and success of the scheme.

These proposals have been discussed with Essex County Council and other preceptors throughout the year. The Preceptors are finalising a sharing agreement that will prioritise income recovery and therefore there is a requirement that the scheme promotes prompt reporting of changes in circumstances and minimises Council Tax discount fraud, which directly impacts all Taxpayers.

## **Options**

### **1. Do nothing**

The County have proposed a revenue incentive scheme designed to minimise fraud and error across all Council Tax discounts and exemptions, including Council Tax Support. It is in the interest of Brentwood's taxpayers that the Borough participates.

### **2. Design a scheme that is compliant with the ECC partnership**

The Council is already saving £1 million of public money now compared to Council Tax Benefit expenditure. The technical changes will allow the Council to review awards on a firm but fair basis to ensure that taxpayers are getting the support that they need, when they need it and get that support reduced or removed when they no longer need it.

### 3. Consider wider implications.

The scheme proposed by the Members Working Group complies with the Pan-Essex agreement to deliver schemes that are largely cost-neutral, with the savings impacting upon the claimants and not the preceptors and implicit in that is an acceptance of the Essex wide localised regulatory framework. It complies with the 4 principles of taxation:

1. **Efficient** – tax is primarily designed to raise revenue, it should not produce undue economic burdens..
2. **Understandable** – tax should not be unjust or unnecessary complex. The more complex tax is the more expensive it is to collect.
3. **Equitable** - Taxation should be governed by people's *ability to pay*
4. **Benefit Principle** - Those that use a publicly provided service should pay for it.

Our scheme also allows the Council to affect behavioural change. More support is provided to those who are vulnerable and to those taxpayers who are in work. Incentives exist within the scheme to promote increased hours. It therefore follows that the Council should consider whether any wider policy objectives can be included.

## Consultation Considerations

Essex County Council wrote to Leaders and Finance Directors detailing their view that billing authorities should take action to reduce the cost of discounts and exemptions including Council Tax Support.

- Thirty eight taxpayers responded to the Council consultation.

## Impact on Families

On 18 August 2014 the Prime Minister announced [the introduction of a 'family test'](#).

The objective of the test is to introduce a family perspective to the policy making process. It will ensure that policy makers recognise and make explicit the potential impacts on family relationships in the process of developing and agreeing new policy

The families test forms part of the decision making and falls within the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- 1) **What kinds of impact might the policy have on family formation?**

Couple relationships are the starting point for most families, and committed couple relationships bring significant benefits for the individuals themselves and children in those families. Council Tax Support awards additional premiums for families and couples within those families.

2) **What kind of impact will the policy have on families going through key transitions such as becoming parents, getting married, fostering or adopting, bereavement, redundancy, new caring responsibilities or the onset of a long-term health condition?**

Becoming parents – no change to existing policy although enhanced rates of support exist for families with children

Getting married – No change to policy but enhanced rates exist for claimants who have a partner.

Fostering or adopting. No change to existing policy

Bereavement – No change to existing policy

Redundancy – No change to existing policy

New caring responsibilities – Brentwood’s scheme includes enhanced levels of support for carers, when compared to equivalent levels offered by the Council Tax Benefit.

Long term health conditions – it is part of these proposals to extend support to those who qualify for the support component of Employment and Support Allowance.

These taxpayers have a limited capacity for work related activity.

3) **What impacts will the policy have on all family members’ ability to play a full role in family life, including with respect to parenting and other caring responsibilities**

Council Tax Benefit and the pensioner Council Tax Support scheme include non dependent deductions. In the case of pensioners aged 65+ these are applied after 26 weeks. With Brentwood’s working age Council Tax Support scheme no deduction applies. By removing non dependant deductions, a financial disincentive to include grandparents and uncles has been mitigated.

4) **How does the policy impact families before, during and after couple separation?**

No change to existing policy. All appropriate disregards, exemptions and discounts are applied to a customers’ account when Council Tax Support is awarded.

## 5) How does the policy impact those families most at risk of deterioration of relationship quality and breakdown?

There is a very wide range of factors that can undermine the quality of family relationships and contribute to breakdown. Some of these are related to specific behaviours within the family such as alcohol dependency, domestic violence or problem gambling. Our Revenues and Benefits Service is working with the CAB and charitable organisations to minimise the impact of debt upon families. This is being done as part of our local support services framework. The long term goal is that this framework forms part of the wider local delivery of Universal Credit.

This document details only the scheme changes, a detailed analysis of the scheme is available on request.

This scheme was originally designed so that those affected by reductions in support levels can mitigate that reduction by either finding employment or moving to a cheaper property. The proposed changes to the scheme continue that principle. For example those subject to the minimum income floor can either demonstrate to the authority that earnings are actually low, or they can take action to improve employment prospects. Increased availability of online forms reduces the need for a taxpayer to come in to the office, which enables the authority to restrict backdated awards.

The changes being considered affect Working Age claimants only. The DCLG regulate the minimum requirements of the scheme for those of pension age.

Disability	Positive	Negative
	<p>Higher allowances will continue to be awarded in the calculation of support for those receiving disability benefits.</p> <p>The removal of non-dependant deductions will provide those with the disability premium the same protection afforded to those with the severe disability premium under the current Council Tax Benefit scheme. Our proposal allows for a non-dependant to stay and provide help where necessary without any deduction.</p> <p>The disabled and vulnerable are on average better off as a result of Council Tax Support.</p>	<p>Decisions concerning disability are not going to be made by the Council. The DWP is currently reviewing all disability benefits, including and not limited to employment and support allowance. As a result of this review, some recipients may lose protection. Brentwood's scheme mirrors applicable amounts via its needs allowances, therefore any transitional protection awarded to ESA recipients will be picked up in our scheme. It is not feasible for the Council to perform medical assessments, nor is it the intention of the Council to make CTR a disability related support. Disability decisions are therefore best placed to remain with the DWP, the decision will then be followed by the Council.</p>

Household demographics	Positive	Negative
Single person Household.	<p>13 week protection would be available to those who could afford their property.</p> <p>Single people are able to move into work more easily than other demographic groups and then qualify for the lower taper.</p>	<p>Single people under 25 are less likely to be impacted by this change. This is because of Housing Benefit restrictions which limit single people, aged under 35 to the maximum rent for 1 bedroom in a shared house. This group is better able to be mobile in the labour and property market.</p> <p>Most claimants in shared accommodation are not required to pay Council Tax</p> <p>Older single claimants above the age of 35 are likely to be expected to pay more.</p>
Lone Parent Families	<p>13 week protection would be available to those who could afford their property.</p> <p>Lone Parents will benefit from a £25 earned income disregard.</p> <p>The premiums that exist now, which reflect the additional costs of being a lone parent are continuing.</p> <p>Lone Parents, with older children will benefit from the removal of non-dependant reductions.</p>	<p>Lone parents who are long term unemployed will be expected to pay more.</p> <p>Some working age lone parents may lose out by the inclusion of child benefit and child maintenance in the assessment of support.</p> <p>Lone parents do have a higher needs allowance, which has been built in to the scheme.</p> <p>The greatest impact of the Child Benefit and Maintenance changes will be felt by those with relatively higher income levels.</p>
Families with children	<p>13 week protection would be available to those who could afford their property.</p> <p>The premiums that exist now, which reflect the additional costs of bringing up a family are continuing.</p> <p>Families with older children will benefit from the removal of non-dependant reductions.</p>	<p>Families who are long term unemployed will be expected to pay more.</p> <p>Some working age parents may lose out by the inclusion of child benefit and child maintenance in the assessment of support. Parents do have a higher needs allowance, which has been built in to the scheme</p> <p>The greatest impact of the Child Benefit and Maintenance</p>

		changes will be felt by those with relatively higher income levels.
Households with carer(s)	Enhanced levels of support were added for carers into the Brentwood scheme for 2014/15. There is no proposal to remove this.	In cases where the claimant is the cared for person, the household will be better off.  Brentwood's scheme offers enhanced levels of support for carers compared to Council Tax Benefit and is more generous towards carers than any other in Essex.

Race / Ethnicity	Positive	Negative
No data held	The scheme will not treat people in these groups any differently.  Facilities are available for those for whom spoken or written English is either not available or a second language.	Black and ethnic minority communities often face higher rates of unemployment than other groups. These changes are designed to minimise the impact of the reduction in funding on those who have no ability to increase their earning potential through employment.

Armed Services	Positive	Negative
Less than 20 taxpayers impacted	Brentwood Borough Council offers enhanced levels of support to those who have been widowed or disabled as a result of service to the Country.  The national schemes offer a disregard of only £10 off War Widows and War disablement pensions (and their replacements). Brentwood fully disregards these incomes in full, In addition we enhance their awards above levels that they would have been entitled to under Council Tax Benefit, this significantly reduces the level of tax that these residents are liable for.  Where a long term empty premium is to be applied, the	None. Brentwood fully meets our commitment to the Armed Services Covenant.

	Council will exempt from the surcharge a dwelling which is the sole or main residence of a member of the armed forces, who is absent from the property as a result of such service	
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Gender	Positive	Negative
Neutrality	This scheme does not treat men or women differently. The premiums and levels of support are the same regardless of gender.	No additional burden is being placed on families by changes that Brentwood Borough Council are proposing in relation to our CTR scheme.
Females	Unemployment among women in Brentwood is low.	
Males		Male unemployment is higher in Brentwood than female unemployment although the overall unemployment rate is significantly lower than the national average.

## Issues and Recommendations

Council Tax Support is now nearing steady state. 2017/18 will be its fifth year of operation. Brentwood Borough Council has designed a scheme, which we believe targets the reductions towards those most able to improve their circumstances.

To protect vulnerable people who may be unable to improve their circumstances, it is proposed to continue an allowance within the scheme for individual taxpayers facing hardship. This is proposed at 2% of overall expenditure. This hardship fund allow for specific individual circumstances to be taken into account where appropriate.

In addition to this, for cases that fall outside of the hardship scheme Essex County Council are funding an exceptional hardship scheme of 0.2% of expenditure.

Comments on this document should be sent to;

Local Support for Council Tax  
Brentwood Borough Council  
Town Hall, Ingrave Road,  
Brentwood, Essex CM15 8AY

Email: [lcts@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:lcts@brentwood.gov.uk) Web address: [www.brentwood.gov.uk/lcts](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk/lcts)

Note: Large print copies of this document can be requested

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### LCTS – 2017/18 Risk Management Implications

Risk Description	Current Score	Controls/Assurances/Actions	Target
<p><b>Category:</b> Service Effectiveness/Reputation</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Failure to deliver a scheme that meets the needs of Customers including vulnerable groups, resulting in the Council being poorly regarded.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective analysis of scheme both in financial and procedure terms.</li> <li>• Exceptional Discretionary &amp; Hardship funding is available (albeit limited) to support and safeguard residents that may be struggling.</li> </ul>	Medium
<p><b>Category:</b> Service Effectiveness</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Risk that the other welfare reform changes that are happening at the same time as the localisation of council tax support could have a detrimental impact on the scheme.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has developed a package for the customers in relation to the ongoing various changes.</li> <li>• The Council is working closely with the DWP to identify cases at an early stage.</li> <li>• Welfare Debt Advisors have been appointed to assist with managing this risk, whilst sharing knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>	Medium
<p><b>Category:</b> Financial</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> Risk of non-repayment of charges could have significant financial implications for the council.</p>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional Discretionary &amp; Hardship funding is available (albeit limited) to support and safeguard residents that require additional support.</li> <li>• Bed debt provision is in place.</li> <li>• Welfare Debt Advisors have been appointed to assist in the mitigation of this risk and to provide additional support whilst sharing skills and knowledge.</li> <li>• Innovative in the collection of charges to increase likelihood of the successful collection of charges.</li> </ul>	Medium

<p><b>Category:</b> Financial</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a risk of increased legal challenge to the scheme following the localisation of Council Tax, particularly as there is now case law to protect the Council.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has a fair scheme and has maintained the ethos of the previous scheme which, therefore, should reduce the likelihood of legal challenge.</li> <li>• Robust consultation has been undertaken with Customers.</li> <li>• The correct delegated powers are in place.</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>
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**29 November 2016**

## **Policy, Finance and Resources Committee**

### **Transfer of Housing Revenue Account Shops (HRA) to General Fund.**

**Report of:** *John Chance, Finance Director*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the transfer of the shops portfolio, including any flats above the shops, from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the General Fund (GF). The portfolio comprises of 28 shops which are no longer used for the housing purposes for which they were originally acquired.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)**

**It is recommended that the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee agrees:**

- 2.1 That the HRA shops portfolio including any flats above the shops to be transferred to the General Fund.**
- 2.2 For officers to apply for consent from the Secretary of State to transfer any flats above the shops from the HRA to the General fund.**

#### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 At 31 March 2015 the Council owned 2,496 dwellings, 1,095 garages and car spaces and 24 shops that were accounted for in the HRA.
- 3.2 International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) require that these properties are categorised according to the purposes for which the Council holds them. As part of the Council's continuous review of its assets, some properties have been identified where the Council's reason for holding them has changed since the original acquisition, which requires that these properties be moved from one class of assets to another.

- 3.3 Where the purpose for holding a property is not related to the provision of housing under Part II of the Housing Act 1985, the property cannot be held within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). If a property is currently held with the HRA, usually as a result of being originally acquired or constructed under Housing powers, it must be transferred (“appropriated”) to the General Fund.
- 3.4 The shops have remained in the HRA as a result of being acquired using housing powers. The shops were originally provided as part of neighbourhood development but no longer contribute to the achievement of a housing objective. Some of the leases include the flats above the shops.
- 3.5 The right to buy policy (where tenants can purchase their council home from the council at a discounted price) means that an increasing proportion of properties on the Council’s housing estate are occupied by leaseholders or private tenants of leaseholders rather than Council housing tenants which was the case when estates were originally built. This means that the shops are no longer supplied solely for the neighbourhood of the housing tenants.

#### **4 Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The shops currently sitting in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) were originally provided as part of neighbourhood development. These shops are now let on a purely commercial basis, and are not there to meet the need of HRA tenants. There are also 18 flats above the shops of which 9 are included as part of the leases to the shops.
- 4.2 The list of shops that are being proposed for transfer are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1 – List of HRA and Annual Rental Income**

<b>Shop Address</b>
26 Copperfield Gardens
36 Copperfield Gardens
2 Harewood Road
4 Harewood Road
6-8A Harewood Road
1 The Keys Eagle Way
2 The Keys Eagle Way
3 The Keys Eagle Way
4 The Keys Eagle Way
5 The Keys Eagle Way
6 The Keys Eagle Way
7 The Keys Eagle Way

8 The Keys Eagle Way
9a The Keys Eagle Way
9b The Keys Eagle Way
9c The Keys Eagle Way
9d The Keys Eagle Way
10 The Keys Eagle Way
70 Orchard Avenue
114 Orchard Avenue
120 Orchard Avenue
1 Rayleigh Parade
2 Rayleigh Parade
3 Rayleigh Parade
4 Rayleigh Parade
5 Rayleigh Parade
6 Rayleigh Parade
48/50 Blackmore Rd
<b>Total Annual Income £178,874</b>

### **Financial Effect of Transfer**

- 4.3 The transfer of assets from the HRA to the General Fund implies that the rental income will be accounted for in the General Fund. The approximate revenue impact to the General fund could be a net gain of £54k after allowing for the MRP of £125k as explained under financial implications.

### **5 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 To comply with legislation, the shops should be transferred from the HRA to the General Fund. As 9 of the leases include the flats above and 2 further flats are Council owned, it would be prudent to transfer the flats to the General Fund.

### **6 References to Corporate Plan**

- 6.1 Good financial and asset management underpins all priorities within the Corporate Plan.

### **7 Implications**

#### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312513 /ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 7.1 Best practice determines that the shops are General Fund properties based on the current nature of the assets. Furthermore, where an asset is held to achieve a return for capital appreciation as in the case here, the correct classification is investment property.

- 7.2 The decision to transfer between the HRA and General Fund, transfers the risks and rewards of the shops from the HRA to the General Fund. The maintenance and managing of the shop portfolio will be the responsibility of the General Fund and any works required will reduce the net impact to the revenue received.
- 7.3 Asset transfers between the HRA and General Fund are dealt with by means of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) adjustments.
- 7.4 The General Fund CFR will be increased by the equivalent amount of the valuation of the shop portfolio. The cost of servicing the debt will be met from the income generated by the assets, as the properties will be considered to be investment properties. However, they will not be subject to a depreciation charge, but instead will be subject to annual revaluations.
- 7.5 The Council will need to revisit its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy in order to calculate the MRP provision needed on the transfer of shops. The approximate MRP cost to the General fund could be £125k.

#### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Saleem Chughtai, Legal Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / [saleem.chughtai@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:saleem.chughtai@brentwood.gov.uk)**

- 7.6 Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the Council may appropriate for any purpose which the Council is authorised to acquired land, any land which belongs to the Council and is no longer required for the purpose for which it is held immediately before appropriation.
- 7.7 Section 19 (2) of the Housing Act 1985 provides that the Council shall not appropriate land held for the purposes for Part II of the 1985 Act without the consent of the Secretary of State if any part of the land consists of a house or part of a house for any other purpose. As the flats fall under this category, permission will be required from the Secretary of State to transfer the flats from the HRA to the General Fund.
- 7.8 For the shops as proposed in this report, Section 19(2) of the 1985 Act has no relevance as the land to be appropriated to the GF does not consist of a house or part of a house. To appropriate the shops from the HRA to the GF, the Council will rely on the power in Section 122 on the 1972 Act. In order to avail itself of the appropriation power, the Council needs to be able to confirm that the land is no longer required for the purpose for which it was held immediately before the appropriation.
- 7.9 Given the circumstances of the report and the mix of tenures that have arisen through, the 'right to buy' scheme, other changes in tenure and the

commercial lease of the shops, transferring the shops from the HRA to the GF would not be an unreasonable position to take.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

7.10 **Asset Management** – The General Fund will manage the shop portfolio and will bear the risks and rewards of the shop portfolio.

## **8 Appendices to this report**

None

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

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**29<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Policy, Finance and Resources Committee**

**Procurement Strategy - 2016 to 2019**

**Report of:** *Philip Ruck, Chief Executive*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report asks Members to approve the Council's Procurement Strategy for 2016 to 2019.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Agree the Council's Procurement Strategy for 2016 to 2019 attached as Appendix A.**

## **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The current economic climate is constantly presenting challenges to officers responsible for undertaking and managing significant procurement exercises. There is a need to think differently and develop new ideas and strategies in all stages of the commercial cycle in order to increase efficiency and maximize savings.
- 3.2 As part of its commitment to obtaining best possible value the Council commissioned the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) to conduct a review of all the Council's Procurement activities. EELGA's partner, SPS Consultancy Services Ltd, was brought in to conduct the review, which included a workshop where officers were able to discuss their views, and, in individual private interviews, highlight any issues they felt needed addressing.
- 3.3 The results from this exercise of listening to those working in the field were coupled with modern thinking around procurement to produce new, up-to-date, and forward-looking Procurement Strategy that will direct our procurement activities over the next three years. The Procurement is attached as Appendix A.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The current procurement strategy is now out of date and needs revising.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 Effective procurement practice is essential to the Council's financial standing and reputation.
- 5.2 This new Procurement Strategy will give the Council one central strategic direction that can be communicated to all staff.
- 5.3 It highlights the importance of good practice at all stages of the commercial cycle.
- 5.4 The new Strategy brings the Council's practice up to date and make provision for improving Social Value within the local community.
- 5.5 It reflects modern trends towards collaborative supplier relationships and ties in with recent training in contract management offered to all staff.
- 5.6 Emphasises the areas where savings can be made.

#### **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The Council consulted with the Local Government Association who engaged SPS Consultancy Ltd to consult with officers responsible for procurements, whose views informed the new strategy.

#### **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 The Strategy refers to the Vision for Brentwood corporate plan in that it sets out how the Council should manage the expenditure that goes through the commercial cycle, with the intention of delivering the most cost effective and appropriate financial and social outcomes for the residents of the Borough.

#### **8. Implications**

##### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312513/ ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 None

**Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Saleem Chughtai, Legal Services Manager**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / saleem.chughtai@brentwood.gov.uk**

8.2 None

**9. Background Papers**

9.1 None

**10. Appendices to this report**

Appendix A - Council's Procurement Strategy for 2016 to 2019

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**Commissioning and Procurement  
Strategy 2016-2019**

**Procurement Vision for Brentwood**

## Foreword

### Philip Ruck, Chief Executive Officer

Many people tend to regard a strategy as being a framework and direction for doing our day jobs but often give little thought as to how they can make it a reality by changing the way in which they operate.

We are aware that we are spending the public's money and how important it is to ensure that all our spending decisions deliver value for money in the services we deliver to our local community, helping make Brentwood an even better place.

So what do we need to do differently? There are three key themes for change.

**Working together** – commissioning, procurement and contract management are all part of the same process. We need to bring them together both in the way we plan our requirements and in how we work with colleagues.

**Commercial awareness** – distinguishing between driving better deals for low value / non-core requirements and managing contractor relationships to encourage improvement and innovation for high value / core requirements

**Reporting and record keeping** – measuring how effective we are in managing our contracts and keeping accurate records of changes made to them and meetings with our contractors.

We continue to face another tough few years with our budgets, so we need to plan our acquisitions carefully to achieve the outcomes we want. We also want to deliver “social value”; ensuring what is commissioned has a direct benefit to the local community – including such things as the use of local and small businesses, the voluntary sector and the creation of local apprenticeships when possible.

Our new Commissioning and Procurement Strategy and its implementation plan sets out in broad terms:

- How we intend to make our vision for procurement and commissioning in Brentwood a reality;
- The actions that will ensure it happens
- How it will make sure expenditure is well managed, fully transparent and delivering social value

I urge everyone to spend a few minutes reading it and ensure they act upon it. Making it a reality will benefit everyone; council staff, local businesses and, above all the people who we serve.

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## Summary

Our expenditure with suppliers and service providers was over £14 million in 2014/15 with over 800 suppliers and providers (of which 7% are local<sup>1</sup>). Some of these help us deliver our core services and the outcomes we achieve. It covers:

- **Key infrastructure for Brentwood**, such as all buildings, social housing and communications
- **Community services**, such as housing repairs /maintenance and leisure facilities
- **Supporting equipment and services**, such as technology and equipment and materials to maintain our infrastructure
- **Utilities**, such as electricity, gas and water

Figure 1 shows our major expenditure categories from third parties.

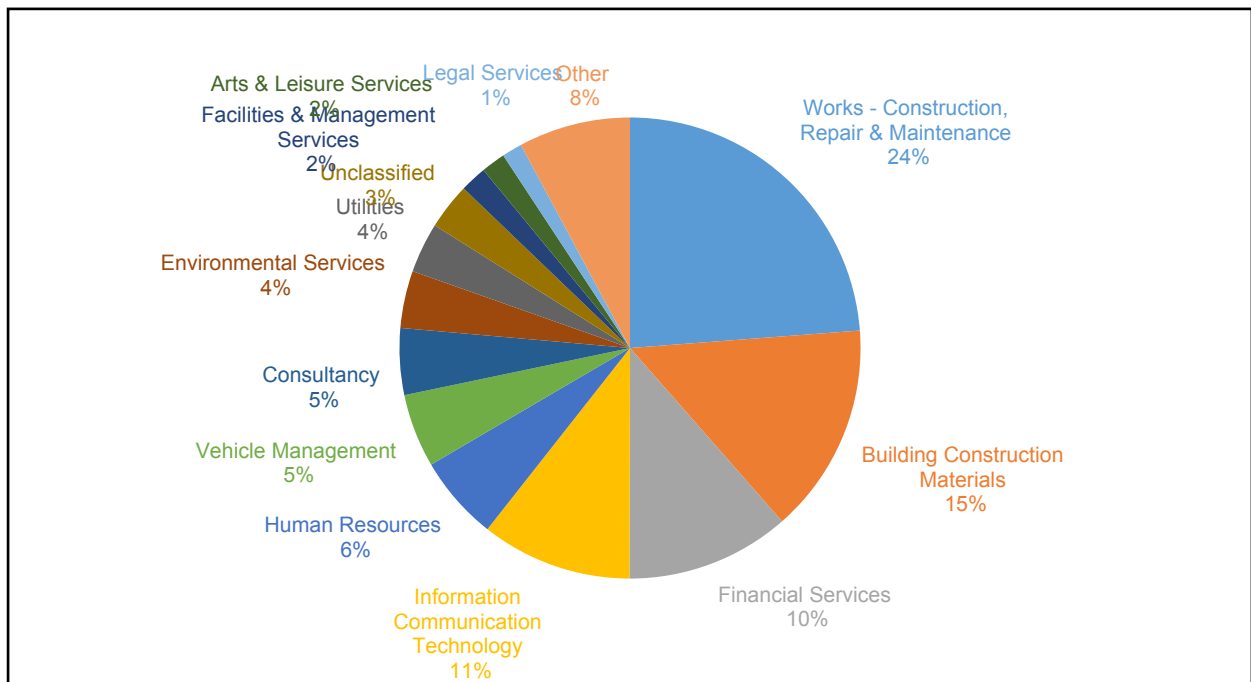


Figure 1 – Main spend categories in 2014/15

We do this in an environment of major change:

- **Our budgets are reducing** – we have already saved £10 million since 2015 and need to find another £3 million by the end of 2018/19
- **Demographic changes are happening** – people are living longer and the population is rising which means more demand for our services while inequalities are widening
- **Service expectations are rising** – people want to be able to interact with the council and public services through digital means

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as having a permanent operation in any of four local postcodes

The outcomes that we achieve can have a major impact on the quality / cost of our services and our reputation in the eyes of our residents.

We also operate in a regulated sector, which means that we have to comply with laws and regulations laid down by both the UK Government and the European Union.

**Getting our specifications right, selecting the right contractors and managing the subsequent contracts and relationships to achieve the right outcomes at the right cost and time is fundamental to the way we must operate.**

### What this Strategy Covers

Whatever we acquire goes through a cycle of activities that is common to organisations in all sectors. This cycle is known as the commercial cycle, see Figure 2.



Figure 2– Main activities in the Commercial Cycle

Although, the activities in this cycle are inter-dependent, they are often carried out by different people in the Council. How much time and effort we put into each activity in the commercial cycle depends on their value and importance to us. For most routine or low value services and products, it is usually a case of obtaining the right requirement at the best price with the minimum of administration. For complex, or high value services or products, we do a lot more to ensure that we get the right outcomes while minimising our costs.

We also understand the consequences of the decisions that we take as they can have a clear impact on:

- our local community and the lives of people
- our suppliers and the associated markets
- our legal obligations nationally and internationally (e.g. the European Union --- currently applicable for procurements of goods and services over a value of 164,176 and for works valued over £4,104,394; to be reviewed January 2018)
- our reputation as a Council

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Only by managing the commercial cycle activities in a unified and proportionate way can we be sure that we will:



- get the right outcomes from our contracts
- control our costs
- achieve community benefits through social value (where legally permissible and commercially feasible)
- ensure our contracts are legally compliant and effectively managed
- make the most of the opportunities provided by technology

By doing this, we can make the best use of our resources to meet local community needs.

This strategy sets out how we intend to manage the expenditure that goes through the commercial cycle each year so that we deliver the right financial and social outcomes in line with our Corporate Plan – **Vision for Brentwood 2016-2019**

[Vision for Brentwood 2016-19](#)

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### **Why Commissioning and Procurement is important**

Our third party expenditure is crucial to the way we deliver our core services and the outcomes that we achieve. How we deliver our core services has a direct impact on the ways in which our performance and resident satisfaction is ultimately measured. These include:

- **Service outcomes** – the quality and frequency of what is delivered to local people set against increasing demand in many areas and changing demographics
  - **Use of financial resources** – the funding of services delivered by suppliers/providers from within smaller budgets while maintaining and improving standards wherever possible
  - **Local economy** – the amount of money we spend with suppliers and service providers in the local economy through a coordinated and consistent approach to local businesses
  - **Social value** – the added benefits that we achieve in our contracts for the community (e.g. new facilities or apprenticeships)
  - **Sustainability** – the way in which our suppliers use scarce natural resources, their impact on the environment and the health and well-being of people (e.g. modern slavery recently covered by government legislation)
- 

### **Why we need this strategy**

There are strict rules governing how we source our suppliers and award contracts. These are designed to help us comply with appropriate laws while ensuring that we achieve fairness and transparency.

Achieving the right outcomes in this work involves a lot of people in the Council as well as with our suppliers and partners. Our requirements and contracts are often complex. This strategy has been prepared to:

- Give a clear direction for fulfilling our vision and goals for procurement and commissioning
- Contribute to our financial health by delivering sustainable savings
- Help us to achieve social value in our large contracts, for example by encouraging economic regeneration and job creation through apprenticeships
- Set out our policies for delivering outcome improvements and the achievement of Value for Money
- Show how we intend to work with all of our partner organisations

***This strategy is a statement to everyone about the outcomes we wish to achieve through integrated procurement, commissioning and contract and relationship management and how we intend to get there.***

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## **Our Vision for Commissioning and Procurement**

***We want to commission, acquire and manage our third party expenditure so that it achieves optimum cost efficiency while actively contributing to the goals set out in our Vision for Brentwood 2016-19.***

We believe this vision is best achieved by striving towards the following strategic objectives:

- Full integration of commissioning, procurement and contract management activity and commercial principles into our core business activities
- Sound governance, transparency, accountability and probity with proportionality in our operational processes
- A unified approach to managing the activities in the commercial cycle and in engagement with markets and suppliers
- Working with our partners
- Effective use of digital technology
- Making the most of our people, increasing capacity and skills and building an in-house strategic commissioning and procurement capability

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing the cultural changes that adopting this strategy will create both internally and externally which will link to the Council's wider transformation programme.

Identifying what needs to happen to make these objectives a reality and managing these required changes forms the basis of our Procurement Implementation and Delivery Plan.

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### Document Summary

Date for review of the policy	2018/19 Financial year
Responsible Chief Officer	Jane Mitchell
Version of Policy	Version 2
Date	27 July 2016

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## **Members Interests**

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, of if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

## **Policy, Finance and Resources Committee**

1. The functions within the remit of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee include all financial matters relating to the budget, (and for the avoidance of doubt, being the superior Committee on all such matters including capital, revenue and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) except where the law otherwise requires), and, without prejudice to the generality of this, include the specific functions which are set out below.

### Policy

To undertake and discharge any functions in relation to strategic policies including periodic reviews of the policy framework adopted by full Council from time to time except where required by law to be undertaken elsewhere.

### Finance

- 1) Financial Services
- 2) Contracts, commissioning, procurement
- 3) Legal services
- 4) Health and safety at work (in so far as it relates to the Council as an employer)
- 5) Corporate communications and media protocols
- 6) Corporate and Democratic services
- 7) Member Development
- 8) Data quality
- 9) Human resources
- 10) Information Communication Technology
- 11) Revenues and Benefits
- 12) Customer Services
- 13) Assets (strategically)

2. Overall responsibility for monitoring Council performance.
3. To formulate and develop relevant corporate policy documents and strategies including the Corporate Plan.
4. To formulate the budget proposals in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework, including capital and revenue spending, and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (including rent setting for Council homes), in accordance with the Council's priorities and make recommendations to Council for approval.
5. To formulate the Council's Borrowing and Investment Strategy and make recommendations to Council for approval.
6. To take decisions on spending within the annual budget to ensure delivery of the Council's priorities.
7. To approve the making of a virement or payment from the Council's reserves with a maximum value of £200,000.
8. To approve the write-off of any outstanding debt owed to the council above the delegated limit of £5,000.
9. To determine capital grant applications.
10. To make recommendations on the allocation and use of resources to achieve the Council's priorities.
11. To manage and monitor the Council approved budgets;
12. To provide the lead on partnership working including the joint delivery of services.
13. To consider any staffing matters that are not delegated to Officers, such as proposals that are not contained within existing budgetary provision.
14. To strategically manage any lands or property of the Council and provide strategic property advice relating to the Council's Housing Stock and without prejudice to the generality of this, to specifically undertake the following:-



## The Council's Asset Management Plan

- (a) The acquisition and disposal of land and property and taking of leases, licenses, dedications and easements.
- (b) The granting variation renewal review management and termination of leases licenses dedications and easements
- (c) Promoting the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties.
- (d) To manage any lands or property of the Council;
- (e) To include properties within the Council's Asset Management Portfolio including Halls etc.
- (f) To take a strategic approach to asset management, ensuring that the use of all of the Council's Property assets achieves Value for Money and supports the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.
- (g) To review the Corporate Asset Management Plan annually.
- (h) The acquisition of land in advance of requirements for the benefit, improvement or development of the Borough.
- (i) Disposal of land (including by lease) surplus to the requirements of any Panel or Committee.
- (j) Appropriation of land surplus to the requirements of a committee.
- (k) Promote the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties where appropriate
- (l) Property and asset management, including acquisitions and disposals not included in the approved Asset Management Plan.
  
- (m) To take a strategic approach to commercial activity, both existing and new, ensuring the Council realises revenue generation opportunities and supports the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.
- (n) Promoting a culture of entrepreneurialism and building the required skills and capacity.
- (o) To consider, and approve, business cases and commercial business plans for commercial activity.

15. To consider and propose matters concerning the promotion of economic development throughout the Borough and the interface with countywide or regional economic development initiatives.

#### Economic Development

- (a) To lead, consider and propose matters concerning the promotion of economic development throughout the Borough and the interface with countywide or regional economic development initiatives.
- (b) To promote and encourage enterprise and investment in the Borough in order to maintain and sustain the economic wellbeing and regeneration of the area.
- (c) To develop a climate where businesses and individuals can innovate, compete and contribute to the economic development and regeneration of the area; and excellence in local business.
- (d) To encourage the growth of existing businesses in the Borough and access to the skills and training necessary to support them.
- (e) To develop and deliver a Borough wide initiative on apprenticeships
- (f) To consider and determine matters relating to the promotion, maintenance and enhancement of the vitality and viability of shopping centres within the Borough.
- (g) To consult with the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, residents and other interested third parties.
- (h) To maintain a special interest in promoting employment in the borough.
- (i) To promote and encourage tourism and heritage
- (j) Parking (off Street parking provision in Council owned/leased off-street parking places)
- (k) Crossrail

16. To review and facilitate the transformation of delivery of services.

Transformation

- (a) To approve and facilitate the transformation of delivery of services.

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