

Cabinet Agenda

Date: Thursday 25 May 2023

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: The Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub,
Kenmore Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LU

Membership:

Chair: Councillor Paul Osborn (Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy)

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor Marilyn Ashton

Councillor David Ashton

Councillor Stephen Greek

Councillor Hitesh Karia

Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillor Mina Parmar

Councillor Anjana Patel

Councillor Pritesh Patel

Councillor Norman Stevenson

Portfolio:

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration

Finance & Human Resources

Performance, Communications & Customer Experience

Children's Services

Community & Culture

Housing

Environment & Community Safety

Adult Services & Public Health

Business, Employment & Property

Non-Executive Members:

Role:

Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar

Councillor Kanti Rabadia

John Higgins

Non-Executive Cabinet Member

Non-Executive Cabinet Member

Non-Executive Voluntary Sector Representative

Harrow Youth Parliament Representative

Quorum 3, including the Leader and/or Deputy Leader)

Contact: Nikoleta Kemp, Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer

Tel: 07761 405898 E-mail: nikoleta.kemp@harrow.gov.uk

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Useful Information

Joining the Meeting virtually

The meeting is open to the public and can be viewed online at [London Borough of Harrow webcasts](#)

Attending the Meeting in person

Directions by car:

Go along Kenmore Avenue and head towards the Kenton Recreation Ground. When approaching the end of the Kenmore Avenue turn right before reaching the Kadwa Patidar Centre.

The venue is accessible to people with special needs. If you have specific requirements, please contact the officer listed on the front page of this agenda.

You will be admitted on a first-come-first basis and directed to seats.

Please:

- (1) Stay seated.
- (2) Access the meeting agenda online at [Browse meetings - Cabinet](#)
- (3) Put mobile devices on silent.
- (4) Follow instructions of the Security Officers.
- (5) Advise Security on your arrival if you are a registered speaker.

Filming / recording

This meeting may be recorded or filmed, and if you choose to attend, you will be deemed to have consented to this. Any recording may be published on the Council website.

Agenda publication date: Wednesday 17 May 2023

Agenda - Part I

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence (if any).

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from all Members present.

3. Petitions

To receive any petitions submitted by members of the public or Councillors.

4. Public Questions

To note any public questions received.

Questions will be asked in the order in which they were received. There will be a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

[The deadline for receipt of public questions is 3.00 pm, 22 May 2023. Questions should be sent to publicquestions@harrow.gov.uk

No person may submit more than one question].

5. Councillor Questions

To receive any Councillor questions.

Questions will be asked in the order agreed with the relevant Group Leader by the deadline for submission and there be a time limit of 15 minutes.

[The deadline for receipt of Councillor questions is 3.00 pm, 22 May 2023].

6. Key Decision Schedule May - July 2023 (Pages 7 - 10)

7. Progress on Scrutiny Projects (Pages 11 - 12)

For consideration

Place

KEY 8. Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishment and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewal (Pages 13 - 40)

Report of the Corporate Director of Place and Divisional Director of Housing.

KEY 9. 2-year Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1 Programme

(Pages 41 - 96)

Report of the Corporate Director of Place and the Divisional Director of Housing.

Resources and Commercial

- KEY 10. Household Support Fund (fourth iteration - April 2023 to March 2024)**
(Pages 97 - 148)

Report of the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation.

- KEY 11. Pension Fund Procurement for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Services** (Pages 149 - 164)

Report of the Director of Finance and Assurance.

- 12. New Council Logo** (Pages 165 - 174)

Report of the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation.

- 13. Cabinet Advisory Panels, Consultative Forums and Appointment of Chairs** (To Follow)

Report of the Interim Director of Legal and Governance.

- 14. Appointment of Portfolio Holder Assistants** (To Follow)

Report of the Interim Director of Legal and Governance.

- 15. Any Other Urgent Business**

Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

- 16. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business for the reasons stated.

Agenda Item No	Title	Description of Exempt Information
17	Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishment and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewal – Appendices 1-7	Information under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
18	2-year Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1 Programme – Appendices 1,2,3 and 5	

19	Pension Fund Procurement for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Services – Appendix 2	
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Agenda - Part II

17. Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishment and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewal (Pages 175 - 458)

Appendices 1 – 7 to the report of the Corporate Director of Place and the Divisional Director of Housing.

18. 2-year Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1 Programme (Pages 459 - 520)

Appendices 1,2,3 and 5 to the report of the Corporate Director of Place and the Divisional Director of Housing.

19. Pension Fund Procurement for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Services (Pages 521 - 522)

Appendix 2 to the report of the Director of Finance and Assurance.

Data Protection Act Notice

The Council will record the meeting and will place the recording on the Council's website.

[Note: The questions and answers will not be reproduced in the minutes.]

Deadline for questions	3.00 pm on 22 May 2023
Publication of decisions	26 May 2023
Deadline for Call in	5.00 pm on 02 June 2023
Decisions implemented if not Called in	03 June 2023

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London Borough of Harrow

Key Decision Schedule (June 2023 - July 2023)

June 2023

This is a list of Key Decisions which the Authority proposes to take at the above Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet agenda containing all the reports being considered will be published 5 clear days before the meeting.

A Key Decision is one which is likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to its budget for the service or function to which the decision relates. A decision is significant if it involves expenditure or the making of savings of an amount in excess of £1m of capital or £500,000 of revenue or where savings or expenditure are less than these amounts but they constitute more than 50% of the budget attributable to the service in question; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of two or more wards of the Borough.

Decisions which the Cabinet intends to make in private

The Cabinet may meet in private to consider reports which contain confidential information. A private meeting of the Cabinet is open only to Members of the Cabinet, other Councillors and Council officers. This Schedule also contains non-Key Decisions which involve Cabinet meeting in private. Any person can make representations to the Cabinet if they believe the decision should instead be made in the public Cabinet meeting by emailing democratic.services@harrow.gov.uk.

The membership of the Cabinet is:

[Councillor Paul Osborn](#) (Leader; Strategy)

[Councillor Marilyn Ashton](#) (Deputy Leader, Planning & Regeneration)

[Councillor David Ashton](#) (Finance & Human Resources)

[Councillor Stephen Greek](#) (Performance, Communications & Customer Experience)

[Councillor Hitesh Karia](#) (Children's Services)

[Councillor Jean Lammiman](#) (Community & Culture)

[Councillor Mina Parmar](#) (Housing)

[Councillor Anjana Patel](#) (Environment & Community Safety)

[Councillor Pritesh Patel](#) (Adult Services & Public Health)

[Councillor Norman Stevenson](#) (Business, Employment & Property)

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Subject	Nature of Decision	Cabinet Member / Lead officer	Open or Private Meeting	Additional Documents to be submitted and any Consultation to be undertaken
JUNE 2023				
Community Safety Strategy 2023 - 2026	To seek Cabinet approval of the Community Safety Strategy 2023-26.	Councillor Anjana Patel Acting Corporate Director, Resources glenn.palmer@harrow.gov.uk, tel. 07926 072880	Open	Members, Statutory partners including the Metropolitan Police Service and Health Partners and non-statutory partners including Voluntary and Community Sector organisations whose work is relevant to Community Safety in Harrow.
Leisure Management Contract Extension	To provide an update on the review of the Council's future leisure provision, set out the options for the future delivery of leisure services from September 2024 and seek approval to extend the Council's current Tri-Borough leisure contract (with the London Boroughs of Brent and Ealing) with Everyone Active (SLM Ltd), for 1 year until 31 August 2025.	Councillor Jean Lammiman; Councillor David Ashton Corporate Director Place tim.bryan@harrow.gov.uk, tel. 07917076800	Part exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Consultation with appropriate Officers in the London Boroughs of Brent and Ealing as part of the Tri-borough arrangement. No public consultation would be undertaken in relation to the recommended option as this would result in the continuation of the existing leisure contract specification with the same leisure contractor.
JULY 2023				

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PROGRESS ON SCRUTINY PROJECTS

Review	Methodology	Type of report	Expected date for report to Cabinet	Comments
<p>North West London Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)</p>	<p>Joint Committee</p>	<p>Update reports provided to Health & Social Care sub committee (for information)</p>	<p>As required</p>	<p>The North West London (NWL) JHOSC last met on 8 March 2023, hosted by Ealing Council. The meeting considered the Elective Orthopaedic Centre Consultation and Proposal, NWL ICS update, Inpatient Mental Health Bed Capacity across NWL, NWL JHOSC recommendations and information requests tracker, and NWL JHOSC work programme.</p> <p>There are regular update reports on the JHOSC to Harrow’s Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee so that there is a formal feedback loop between regional and local health scrutiny. Councillor Chetna Halai, Chair of the Health Sub, is Harrow’s member on the JHOSC.</p> <p>The meeting dates for JHOSC 2023-24 have been finalised.</p>
<p>Customer Experience</p>	<p>Review</p>	<p>Report to Cabinet</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>The review group are due to begin work on the chosen methodologies. This includes site visits at Greenhill Library, consultations with VCS partners and an online consultation with the public. Due to the resource required/scope, it is likely the review will require an extension of timeframe – a date has not been finalised.</p>

Childhood Immunisations	Review	Report to Health & Social Care sub committee	TBC	The Review Group met on 7 February 2023 for a briefing on the key issues and progress on the action plan. This was also attended by Health leaders. Headlines were presented to Health & Social Care Sub-committee on 21 February 2023. Comments from Members will feed into the detailed work for the review and it was agreed that a full report is to be brought back to the Health and Social Care Sub in June 2023.
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Contact: Nahreen Matlib, Senior Policy Officer

Email: nahreen.matlib@harrow.gov.uk



Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	25 th May 2023
Subject:	Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishment and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewal
Key Decision:	Yes - procuring the service will exceed the threshold of £500k
Responsible Officer:	Dipti Patel - Corporate Director of Place David McNulty - Divisional Director of Housing
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Mina Parmar - Portfolio Holder for Housing
Exempt:	No, except for appendices 1,2,3,4,5,6 & 7 which are exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 because they contain information relating to the financial & business affairs of the Council
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All Wards
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Draft ITT Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurb (Exempt) Appendix 2 – Articles of Agreement - JCT ICD Kitchens and Bathrooms (Exempt) Appendix 3 – Kitchen & Bathroom Specification Pricing 23-25 (Exempt) Appendix 4 – Draft ITT Windows & Doors Renewal (Exempt) Appendix 5 – Articles of Agreement - JCT ICD Windows and Doors (Exempt) Appendix 6 – Schedule of Works - Windows and doors 2023-25 (Exempt) Appendix 7 – 3-Year Capital programme (Exempt) Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report requests Authority from Cabinet to procure 2-year capital programmes, with the option to extend for 1 further year, for Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals across various wards in the borough, as part of the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) Capital Programme using the open tender procedure.

This approach would attract local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and specialist contractors to tender for either the Kitchen & Bathroom or Windows & Doors programme in two separate 2-year procurements, with the option to extend for a year.

This procurement route should give SME's fair access to the opportunity to tender. It is therefore hoped that the approach will SME's to participate.

The London Borough of Harrow recognise that it is vital that SME's are given the opportunity to be successful in winning public sector construction contracts as they employ local people including apprenticeship schemes, and they also typically spend money with local suppliers and other businesses in the local economy.

We are also seeking delegated authority to award contracts following the outcome of the procurement process.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Grant approval for officers to undertake procurement processes for the selection of two contractors to deliver Kitchens & Bathrooms refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals for 2 years on the 2023/24 & 2024/25 Housing Capital Programmes with the option to extend for a further year for both Lots. The combined value of the Kitchens & Bathrooms Programmes is £2.613M and Windows & Doors Programmes is £1,848M funded from HRA capital resources in financial years 23/24 and 24/25.
2. Approve the commencement of procurement processes to identify suitable providers to deliver both programmes via an open tender process.
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Place, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to make any changes required to the tender documents following approval.
4. Approve the tender documents

5. Delegate authority to award and appoint contractors to both procurements and arrange the execution of contracts with the successful tenderers to the Corporate Director of Place, following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Housing and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources and the Director of Finance.

Reason: (For Recommendations) Cabinet authorisation is required to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations, due to the aggregate estimated value of the potential contracts.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council are about to embark on a 3-year Housing Capital Programme. As such the Council are looking to procure a two-year programme for Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals with an option to extend for a further year based on performance.
- 1.2 Cabinet approval is required to begin the process of procuring contractors for all projects with an estimated value in excess of £500k.
- 1.3 These programmes will run as 2 separate procurements as they are both individually specialist contracts. It is intended to procure through the open market to achieve additional value for money using the London Tenders Portal.
- 1.4 The aim of the Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishments is to bring homes with kitchens or bathrooms that are over 20 or 25 years old respectively up to and surpassing the Decent Homes Standard which is currently 25 & 30-year cycles respectively.
- 1.5 The aim of the Windows and Doors project is to deliver renewals to various addresses across the London Borough of Harrow. The result of this will be better energy efficiency and lower fuel bills for our residents along with better fire security. The addresses form a programme of works which has come from the Data & Planning team following stock condition analysis.
- 1.6 As the Council has prioritised Compliance works, we are now in a downcycle of Decent Homes investment for key elements of disrepair. In order to rectify this, much more investment is required for Decent Homes elements including kitchens, bathrooms, windows & doors.

2.0 Options Considered

2.1 **Option 1: Separate Open tenders for years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 for each contract.**

Engaging in annual open tenders in this instance would result in 6 individual time-consuming procurements and internal governance processes. This could also result in 3 different contractors being nominated for Kitchens & Bathrooms refurbishments and Windows & Doors Renewals respectively, therefore resulting in being more susceptible to price increases and no continuation with client/contractor relationship building.

2.2 **Option 2: Tendering Kitchen & Bathrooms and Windows & Doors together on a 2-year programme with an option to extend for 1 further year.**

This would attract large scale contractors that would sub-contract the works and programmes would be subject to high preliminary costs and management fees. The council believes it would be more beneficial to tender each of these workstreams separately to attract specialist contractors and ensure best value is achieved.

2.3 **Option 3: Do nothing.**

This would mean kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors would fall into disrepair and compromise residents' Health & Safety. This would mean an increase in revenue/repair costs and complaints from residents.

2.4 **Option 4: To undertake 2 separate procurement processes for the selection of 2 contractors to deliver Kitchens & Bathrooms refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals for 2 years in the 2023/24 & 2024/25 Housing Capital Programmes with the option to extend for a further year for both procurements.**

This would attract specialist local SMEs for each procurement, offer a continuation in standards and increased Value for Money for each programme. The decision to take the options to extend can be made after monitoring the contractors' performance and KPIs.

2.5 The recommended option is **Option 4: To undertake 2 separate procurement processes for the selection of 2 contractors to deliver Kitchens & Bathrooms refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals for 2 years in the 2023/24 & 2024/25 Housing Capital Programmes with the option to extend for a further year for both procurements.** Both contracts are to be procured via the open tender process. The advantage of longer-term contracts would be to build relationships with single contractors obtaining value for money as opposed to separate year on year procurement which can incur delays and result in different contractors delivering to different standards.

3.0 Background

3.1 **Kitchens & Bathrooms**

As they are all tenanted properties none of the properties on these programmes are subject to Section 20 of Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) processes.

3.2 Harrow aims to replace kitchens and bathrooms every 25 years and 30 years respectively based on decent homes guidance, stock condition surveys and repairs referrals. We have a fully validated stocklist of circa 372 properties over the next 2 years with a further circa 214 properties in year 3.

Elements	2023/24	2024/25	2-Year Programme Total	Option to extend 2025/26
Kitchens	56	103	159	132
Bathrooms	59	53	112	51
Separate WCs	31	70	101	31
Total Units	146	226	372	214

3.3 The kitchen upgrade will be using Symphony kitchens, who we have been in a successful partnership for over 10 years through the LHC Framework. They provide one of the highest specifications which include options such as larder units to residents. They also take part in resident consultation open days where resident can come and pre-select their kitchen choices & colours and book their surveys.

3.4 Besides bringing our homes to surpassing the Decent Homes Standard, the added benefits to carrying out Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishments is that residents are identified that may need a shower instead of a bath at consultation Referrals are then made to our Adaptations Team. The Kitchen & Bathroom programme will also involve electrical testing which will supplement our EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report) programme following the notice from the Regulator of Social Housing in March 2023.

3.5 **Windows and doors**

As they are all tenanted properties none of the properties on these programmes are subject to Section 20 of Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) processes.

3.6 The aim of Windows and Doors renewal programme is to increase the energy efficiency of our homes and lower fuel bills for our residents along with better security. We have a fully validated stocklist of 440 properties over the next 2 years with a further circa 250 properties in year 3.

Table 3.6a – Windows & Doors Units				
Elements	2023/24	2024/25	2-Year Programme Total	Option to extend 2025/26
Window & Door Programme -Including properties on the SHDF Decarbonization Fund programme	190	250	440	250

- 3.7 Our windows specification stipulates we use A-rated windows to provide a high degree of energy efficiency for our residents. This has become more prevalent with the continued cost of living crisis.
- 3.8 Added benefits of carrying out windows and doors renewals would be increasing the EPC rating of our properties and preparing them for the Decarbonization works planned the Harrow and national Net-zero agenda through the Social Housing Decarbonization Fund Grant works. Homes would also have increased ventilation as the new windows will have trickle vents. This will make them less susceptible to damp and mould hereby improving the health and well-being of our residents.
- 3.9 The SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) segment of Windows and Doors has the option to be contract managed by the approved SHDF delivery partner as per the SHDF Decarbonization Fund Wave Cabinet Report.
- 3.10 The Tender exercise for both procurements will follow Harrow’s standard weighting of:
Price/Commercial – 60%, Quality/Technical – 30%, Social Value, 10%

4.0 Performance Issues

- 4.1 The new contractors will be managed effectively from mobilisation through each project, by the Planned Investment Team. Performance statistics will be reviewed monthly and monitored. Effective and regular communication between the contractors and the Council whilst works are underway will ensure progress with delivery.
- 4.2 The works will be covered for a DLP (Defects Liability Period) for 1 year from commission. Our in-house Clerk of Works will be inspecting works on completion to ensure any snagging is carried out straight away. If the contractor encounters any repairs out of the scope of works, they will notify the Contract Administrator and we will either instruct the contractor to carry out the repair or refer to our term contractor or specialist depending on urgency and/or type of works.
- 4.3 In addition we intend to form monthly project groups, inviting residents and Members to support the management and monitoring of the schemes throughout their implementation.

4.4 KPI Suite

- 1) Client/resident Satisfaction:** Target min 90%
- 2) Cost Predictability:** monthly analysis of projected Final Account against Contract Sum and Actuals monthly valuations against forecast cash flows: Target: within 10% of forecast.
- 3) Quality:** Properties offered to the client as completed: Target 85% no defects. Individual Properties: 5% reduction for every 3rd defect. Max 5-defects per Property. 10% reduction per defect over 5 defects.
- 4) Time Predictability:** Monthly analysis of Actual time against original submitted programme. Target 90% delivery against contract period allowing for any issued contract extensions of time.
- 5) Safety:** Record all site safety incidents or 'near misses' and RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) Incidents. Target 100% no incidents

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 It is the intention of the Asset Management Team that the delivery of all contracts will contribute to the Council's objectives around social, economic, and environmental sustainability. We aim to do all we can to ensure that we support Harrow's economy by buying locally wherever practical and maximise opportunities for local people in employment and training. The contract specification will ensure that tenders provide detailed information about their contribution to the environment and sustainability and by looking for a framework of contractors we hope to procure small, local contractors who will be better placed to employ a local workforce.

6.0 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 The risks relating to the delivery of the Capital Programme will be included in the Housing Risk Register which contains overarching risks in relation to delivery of the Capital Programme. Specific risks will be monitored on the project as it moves forward.
- 6.2 In addition risks are identified and monitored for each individual project undertaken within the service. The contractors are responsible for completing a risk assessment.

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **Yes**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below.
Yes

The following key risks should be considered when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
If the recommendations are not accepted many Harrow properties will fail to meet the Decent Homes standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptance of the recommendations in this report will mitigate this risk 	GREEN
If the recommendations are not accepted there will be an increase in tenant dissatisfaction and complaints, disrepair claims and repair costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptance of the recommendations in this report will mitigate this risk 	GREEN
Materials shortages and cost and delivery issues increase costs on the contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will secure assurance on costs by having a 2-year contract in place with contractors and ensure programmes are turned around efficiently to avoid any delays which could aggravate inflation pressures. ▪ We will pre-order materials where we can 	AMBER
The procurement process is not undertaken properly in compliance with Public Procurement Regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will work closely with the Council's procurement team throughout the procurement to ensure compliance ▪ We will use open market procurement routes as permitted by the Public Contract Regulations 2015. ▪ The Tender exercise for both procurements will also follow Harrow's standard weighting of: Price/Commercial – 60%, Quality/Technical – 30%, Social Value, 10% 	GREEN
Specialist contractors are not attracted to the work during the procurement of the contract and these contractors are required for project success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By tendering to the 'Open Market tender' and listing the elements of work specific to the project in the ITT Kitchen & bathroom and Windows & Doors contractors will be sourced. 	GREEN

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contactors will be experienced and have knowledge in delivering in these areas of work. 	
<p>Arrangements for contract management are not adequate or effective leading to poor quality work and delays on the contract</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contractors will be overseen and managed by the Planned Investment Team ▪ Contracts are adequately resourced internally and also inspected and quality assured by a dedicated Clerk of Works. ▪ Performance statistics will be reviewed monthly and monitored ▪ There will be effective and regular communication between the contractors and the Council whilst works are underway to ensure progress with delivery. ▪ We intend to form monthly project groups, inviting residents and Members to support the management and monitoring of the schemes throughout their implementation. ▪ Works are covered for a DLP (Defects Liability Period) for 1 year from commission. 	<p>GREEN</p>

7.0 Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The estimated value of this procurement is below the financial threshold for Works contracts. Any procurement arising from this report will be advised on and supported by the procurement team and will be conducted in compliance with the Public Contract Regulations [as amended] and the Contract Procedure Rules.
- 7.2 Bidders will be required to provide technical and commercial submissions, with all Tenders being evaluated for both their technical and commercial suitability in relation to the Authority's Requirements.
- 7.3 The proposed procurement process will be the open tender procedure; this will allow for bids from local SMEs and specialist contractors. Bidders will be measured on both their quality and commercial submissions. The Most Economically Advantageous Tender will be recommended for award of the contract.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The total estimated value (including VAT) of each programme is below the financial threshold for public works under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (currently £5,336,937). Therefore, the main provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations do not apply to the respective procurement exercises. The Procurement team have however indicated that an open tender procedure in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules will be carried out.
- 8.2 This will ensure that a robust, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory competitive process is conducted, to select contractors who have demonstrated good technical ability, good financial standing, with solutions that will provide value for money.
- 8.3 As the estimated value of each programme is above £500,000, approval to procure must be obtained by way of a Cabinet Report, as required under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules *Table 1 Authorisation and Acceptance Thresholds*.
- 8.4 The proposed renewal programmes will help contribute to the achievement of the Council's social, economic and environmental objectives and will ensure that the quality of the Council's housing stock is in line with Decent Homes Standards.
- 8.5 HB Public Law will assist with the preparation of the works contracts and will ensure that they are executed in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules on signing and sealing.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The total estimated expenditure of the 2-Year Kitchens & Bathrooms Programme is £3.01M and the 2-Year Windows & Doors Programme is £2.13M. The total 2-year expenditure of £5.143M will be funded from HRA planned investment capital programme budgets of £8.428m in 2023/24 and £8.428m 2024/25.
- 9.2 The extension option of year, if taken, is estimated at £1.976M for Kitchens & Bathrooms and £1,211M for Windows & Doors. The estimated total expenditure of £3.187M funded from the 2025/26 planned investment capital programme budget of £8.428m.
- 9.3 The tables below set out the profile of the expenditure across years and estimated costs against expenditure categories.

10.3a Table 1: Kitchen & Bathrooms Finance				
Kitchens & Bathrooms (K&B)	Spend 2023-24	Spend 2024-25	2-Year Programme Budget	Option Extension Year Spend 2025-26
	£	£	£	£
Works	896,000	1,716,500	2,612,500	1,716,500
Client Contingency 5%	45,000	85,500	130,500	85,500
Asbestos Surveys & Removals	40,000	80,000	120,000	80,000
Staffing	50,000	90,000	140,000	90,000
CDM – Construction Design Management Fee	3000	3000	6000	3000
Legal	500	500	1000	500
Total Kitchen & Bathrooms	1,034,500	1,975,500	3,010,000	1,975,500

10.3b Table 2: Windows & Doors Finance				
Windows & Doors (W&D)	Spend 2023-24	Spend 2024-25	2-Year Programme Budget	Option Extension Year Spend 2025-26
Element	£	£	£	£
Works	798,000	1,050,000	1,848,000	1,050,000
Client Contingency 5%	40,000	52,500	92,500	52,500
Asbestos Surveys & Removals	30,000	40,000	70,000	40,000
Staffing	50,000	65,000	115,000	65,000
CDM – Construction Design Management Fee	3,000	3,000	6,000	3,000
Legal	500	500	1,000	500
Total Windows & Doors	921,500	1,211,000	2,132,500	1,211,000
<u>Total K&B plus W&D</u>	1,956,000	3,186,500	5,142,500	3,186,500

9.4 There are no implication on the General fund as a result of these procurements.

10.0 Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

10.1 The procurement exercise is designed to deliver existing policies and strategies maintaining the current level of equality in service provision. The contract specification will be very clear on the equalities related duties on contractors, given the wide range of needs of our customers.

10.2 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the delivery of the Home Improvement Agency. This identified no need for a full assessment at this stage because it did not identify any

potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact. All opportunities to address diversity and the individual needs of applicants be addressed through the contract specification and ensure residents receive the same service regardless but taking into account specific needs. We will address these in our tendering documents and processes. The assessment will be updated as the project moves forward.

11.0 Council Priorities

- **A council that Puts Residents First**
- **A Borough that is Clean and Safe**
- **A place Where Those in Need are Supported**

11.1 We'll be improving the homes of residents and achieving our decent homes standard

11.2 Specifications for all contracts will ensure that the successful contractor is equipped to provide a high level of customer service to all our residents. In addition, every effort will be made to ensure that local businesses are encouraged to submit tenders and that added social value to support communities will be a part of the evaluation process.

11.3 Increasing energy efficiencies with window & door upgrades, carrying out EICRs to homes. Identifying all vulnerable residents on the programme and putting resident's needs first while undertaking the works. Work in tandem with the Adaptations Team by making any necessary changes prior to referring residents identified to need adaptations.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Tasleem Kazmi

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 09/05/2023

Statutory Officer: Sonia Kounasso

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 05/05/2023

Chief Officer: Dipti Patel

Signed off by the Corporate Director

Date: 11/05/23

Procurement Officer: Daniel Rinn

Signed on behalf of the Head of Procurement

Date: 05/05/2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 10/05/23

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards. During consultation relevant Ward Members impacted by the project will be notified.

YES - An overarching EQIA was undertaken for the programme Directorate Equality Task Group.

EqIA cleared by: Jennifer Rock (12/05/23)

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simbarashe Manjonjori, Interim Planned Investment Manager, Simbarashe.Manjonjori@harrow.gov.uk, tel. 07927 548395

Background Papers: None

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO

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You will need to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) if:

- You are developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- You are making changes that will affect front-line services
- You are reducing budgets, which may affect front-line services
- You are changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
- You are making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
- You are making staff redundant or changing their roles

Guidance notes on how to complete an EqIA and sign off process are available on the Hub under Equality and Diversity. You must read the [guidance notes](#) and ensure you have followed all stages of the EqIA approval process (outlined in appendix 1). Section 2 of the template requires you to undertake an assessment of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. Equalities and borough profile data, as well as other sources of statistical information can be found on the Harrow hub, within the section entitled: [Equality Impact Assessment](#) - sources of statistical information.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)		
Type of Decision:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cabinet <input type="radio"/> Portfolio holder <input type="radio"/> Other (state)	
Title of Proposal	Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishment and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewal	Date EqIA created 28/04/23
Name and job title of completing/lead Officer	Simba Manjonjori – Interim Planned Investment Manager	
Directorate/ Service responsible	Place Directorate	
Organisational approval		
EqIA approved by the EDI Team:	Name: Jennifer Rock Assistant Policy Officer EDI Team	Signature <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA Date of approval: 12.05.23

1. Summary of proposal, impact on groups with protected characteristics and mitigating actions

(to be completed **after** you have completed sections 2 - 5)

a) What is your proposal?

The Council are about to embark on a three-year Housing Capital Programme. As such the Council are looking to procure a two-year programme for Kitchen & Bathroom refurbishments and Windows & Doors renewals with an option to extend for a further year based on performance.

These programmes will run as 2 separate procurements as they are both individually specialist contracts.

The aim of the Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishments is to bring homes with kitchens or bathrooms that are over 20 or 25 years old respectively up to and surpassing the Decent Homes Standard which us currently 25 & 30-year cycles respectively.

The aim of the Windows and Doors project is to deliver renewals to various addresses across the London Borough of Harrow. The result of this will be better energy efficiency and lower fuel bills for our residents along with better fire security. The addresses form a programme of works which has come from the Data & Planning team following stock condition analysis.

b) Summarise the impact of your proposal on groups with protected characteristics

We do not anticipate that these projects will have a negative impact on Harrow residents or result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares protected characteristics.

Outcomes include physical improvements to homes and bring them in line with the Decent Homes Standards.

c) Summarise any potential negative impact(s) identified and mitigating actions

We do not anticipate that these projects will have a negative impact on Harrow residents or result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares protected characteristics.

2. Assessing impact																			
Protected characteristic		What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics? Click the relevant box to indicate whether your proposal will have a positive impact, negative (minor, major), or no impact																	
For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.		Positive impact		Negative impact		No impact													
		Minor	Major																
Age	<p>Harrow has a resident population of 261,300¹. Increasing by 9.3% in the ten years between 2011 and 2021 with an increase of 7.8% in people aged 15 to 64 years, It has an above average working age population aged 16-64 of just under 64% (160,462) and a growing younger population aged 0-15 of 18.5% (48,300), which is higher than the London average, suggesting that the borough is a popular destination for families².</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1"> <caption>Population by Age-band % (Harrow 2021 Census)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Band</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-15</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16-24</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-49</td> <td>37%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-64</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65-84</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>85+</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Age Band	Percentage	0-15	20%	16-24	10%	25-49	37%	50-64	17%	65-84	13%	85+	2%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Age Band	Percentage																		
0-15	20%																		
16-24	10%																		
25-49	37%																		
50-64	17%																		
65-84	13%																		
85+	2%																		

¹ Census 2021

² Census 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with most areas in the country, the borough has an ageing population. With the number of residents aged 65 plus Increasing by 19.4% in the ten years between 2011 and 2021 with 31% rise in people aged 90 years and over³. Those aged 85 plus could increase by 60% by 2030⁴. Data available shows that the pandemic has adversely impacted young people aged 18-24, with 1 in 10 young people out of work⁵. Harrow has one of the lowest proportions of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETS). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in numbers, from 0.8% to 1.8%⁶. (Now 1.2% August 2022⁷) <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their age.</p>				
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 Census data shows that 9.75% of Harrow's population aged 15 to 64 years have a disability this equates to 16,840 people. There is a strong correlation between disability, in particular the extent of the disability, and economic inactivity. There are also particular groups that have specific obstacles in progressing to the labour market or sustaining self-employment. These include adults with learning disabilities and those with severe mental health issues. Disabled people are also likely to be under-represented among business owners within Harrow. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their disability status. The products specified on Kitchen & Bathroom Refurbishments and 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

³ Census 2021

⁴ Poppi and Pansi projections to 2030

⁵ DWP Job claimant data April 2021

⁶ NEETS data at December 2020.

⁷ NEETS data at December 2022.

	Windows & Doors Renewals will be of a generic specification. During consultations and initial surveys, residents with disabilities will be identified and referred to Social Services for the adaptations process to be carried out.				
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) survey found that one in six respondents identified themselves as prejudiced towards transgender people⁸. There is limited national data collected for this characteristic. We will need to consider the inequalities and discrimination experienced for this protected group when data becomes available. The charity Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIRES) estimated in their Home Office funded study in 2009 the number of transgender people in the UK to be between 300,000 and 500,000. More recently Stonewall advised that it is estimated that around 1% of the population might identify as trans, including people who identify as non-binary. This would represent about 600,000 trans and non-binary people in Britain and about 2,500 people in Harrow. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their gender reassignment status. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 Census 53.9% of Harrow's residents were married or in a registered civil partnership, which was the highest level in London. 21% of households were married, or in same-sex civil partnerships, with dependent children, the highest level in London. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

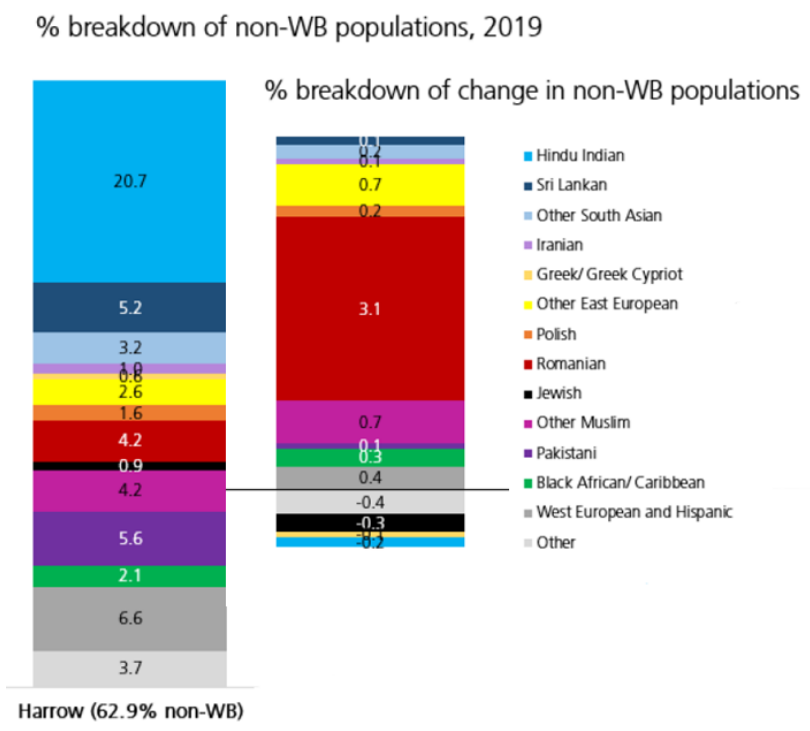
⁸ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2020), Attitudes transgender people, 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At October 2020 there have been 144 Same Gender Civil Partnerships in Harrow, 25 of which has been converted to a Marriage. There have been 8 Opposite Gender Civil Partnerships. There have been 57 Same Sex marriages. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their marriage and partnership status.</p>				
Pregnancy and Maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS births figures show Harrow as having 3,312 live births in 2021⁹. 14 live births per 1000 population is higher than the England & Wales average of 10.8 The borough has a higher-than-average infant mortality rate in London, at a rate of 3.9 deaths per 1000 live births, which is an indicator of poverty and inequality in the borough.¹⁰ Nationally, women have faced discrimination during pregnancy and maternity in the workplace. EHRC Survey data shows that around one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they were either dismissed; made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their pregnancy and maternity status, including residents with childcare/caring responsibilities.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

⁹ Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2022), Live births in England and Wales 2021

¹⁰ Public Health England (2022), London's Poverty Profile 2022,

Race/
Ethnicity



- Harrow is one of the most culturally diverse local authorities in the UK, with over 60% of residents from Black, Asian, and Multi-Ethnic backgrounds and an estimated 20% Eastern European community, which is fast growing¹¹. Black African (notably the Somali Community) groups have been fast growing over the last 6 years or so, as has the Afghan community.
- Unemployment rates are significantly higher in certain areas of the borough, particularly in the Wealdstone and Marlborough wards (central Harrow) and Roxbourne (south Harrow), focused in an around the Rayners Lane estate and among residents classified as Black and Other ethnic groups. These areas are also ranked high on the indices of deprivation for the UK.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------

¹¹ Harrow Economic assessment 2019-2020: population

<p>Religion or belief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of 16–18-year-olds that are classed as NEET are from Black and Multi Ethnic backgrounds and located in wards with high levels of deprivation. However, the data also shows that the single largest ethnic group of pupils aged 16-18 classed as NEET is White British. At ward level Marlborough, and Wealdstone have the highest number of households in need of re-housing. These respectively have a Black and Multi Ethnic population of 77% and 75%. The highest rates of overcrowding is in Greenhill ward (97.5 per 1,000 households) and a Black and Multi Ethnic population of 74% (2011 census). Over 94% of Harrow businesses are classed as micro-businesses. There is limited data on the profile of business ownership by protected characteristics. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most retail businesses in Harrow’s town centres are Black and Multi Ethnic - owned. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their race and ethnicity.</p>																
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious diversity is strong in Harrow. At the 2011 Census Harrow was the most religiously diverse borough in the country with the highest number Hindus (25%) and Jains (2.2%) and the second highest number of Zoroastrians. At the 2021 census Harrow had the highest number (and proportion) of Hindu followers in the country (25.8%). At 2.8% Harrow 's Jewish community was the ninth largest nationally. 33.9% of residents described themselves as Christians (the 11th lowest proportion in the country) and 15.9% described themselves as Muslims. Harrow had the lowest ranking for ‘no religion’ (10.9%). As the population’s ethnic composition changes, rates of participation in various religions are also likely to change¹². There is limited data on employment/unemployment rates for Harrow by religion. <div data-bbox="448 1228 1400 1596"> <p style="text-align: center;">Harrow, Religion 2021 census</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Harrow, Religion 2021 census</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Other religion</td> <td>0.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sikh</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buddhist</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jain</td> <td>2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>2.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Religion	Percentage	Other religion	0.6%	Sikh	1.1%	Buddhist	1.1%	Jain	2.4%	Jewish	2.8%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p>
Religion	Percentage																
Other religion	0.6%																
Sikh	1.1%																
Buddhist	1.1%																
Jain	2.4%																
Jewish	2.8%																

Impact					
Sex	<p>The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their religion or beliefs.</p>				
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 census show that the total population of Harrow is now 261,300, made up of 132,500 women (50.7%) and 128,800 men (49.3%). Overall, the number of males and females living in Harrow is very similar. Economic activity among Harrow's male population is higher than the London average at 86%, compared with 83%¹³. However, economic activity among females in the borough is lower than the London average at 72%. Harrow is a low wage borough, with those that are employed in the borough earning less than the London average weekly earnings of £813.40¹⁴. Women also earn less than men in the borough. The average gross weekly earnings among women working in Harrow is £480.10, this is 28% lower than the London average of £666¹⁵. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

¹² Harrow Economic Assessment: 2019-2020: population

¹³ NOMIS: Labour supply (at December 2020)

¹⁴ Source: NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2021

¹⁵ Source: NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% of Harrow businesses are female led.¹⁶ While the pandemic may have negatively impacted both sexes, the shift to home working may have had a positive impact in enabling women to return to work, as they are able to share childcare responsibilities. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their sex.</p>				
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office for National Statistics estimated in 2014, 2.6% of Londoners identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, the highest of any UK region¹⁷. There is no official data on sexual orientation for Harrow in relation to employment. LGBTQIA+ people are also likely to be underrepresented among business owners within Harrow. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>2.1 Cumulative impact – considering what else is happening within the Council and Harrow as a whole, could your proposals have a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>					
<p>If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below</p>					
<p>2.2 Any other impact - considering what else is happening nationally/locally (national/local/regional policies, socio-economic factors etc), could your proposals have an impact on individuals/service users, or other groups?</p>					

¹⁶ Beauhurst: number of companies registered at Companies House that are female led (April 2021)

¹⁷ Trust for London: London's Poverty profile 2016.

Yes

No

If you clicked the Yes box, Include details in the space below

3. Actions to mitigate/remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your assessment (in section 2) suggests that your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. If you have not identified any negative impacts, please complete sections 4 and 5.

In the table below, please state what these potential negative impact (s) are, mitigating actions and steps taken to ensure that these measures will address and remove any negative impacts identified and by when. Please also state how you will monitor the impact of your proposal once implemented.

State what the negative impact(s) are for each group, identified in section 2. In addition, you should also consider and state potential risks associated with your proposal.	Measures to mitigate negative impact (provide details, including details of and additional consultation undertaken/to be carried out in the future). If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.	What action (s) will you take to assess whether these measures have addressed and removed any negative impacts identified in your analysis? Please provide details. If you have previously stated that you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact please state below.	Deadline date	Lead Officer

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4. Public Sector Equality Duty

How does your proposal meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
3. Foster good relations between people from different groups

Include details in the space below

1. The Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishments and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewals will not result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares the protected characteristics.
The Procurement of Kitchens & Bathrooms Refurbishments and Procurement of Windows & Doors Renewals will improve the living standards of Harrow's housing stock and improve Health & Safety, ventilation and heat loss.

5. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) click the box that applies

Outcome 1

No change required: the EqIA has not identified any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Outcome 2

Adjustments to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment, or to better advance equality, as stated in section 3&4

Outcome 3

This EqIA has identified discrimination and/ or missed opportunities to advance equality and/or foster good relations. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below.

Include details here

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Report for: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	25 May 2023
Subject:	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.1
Key Decision:	Yes - the work will impact a minimum of two wards across Harrow and requires significant expenditure to enable the delivery of a 2-year contract valued to £5.1m, of which grant funding has been approved by DESNZ to £2.147m.
Responsible Officer:	Dipti Patel - Corporate Director of Place David McNulty- Director of Housing
Portfolio Holders:	Councillor Mina Parmar - Portfolio Holder for Housing
Exempt:	No except for appendices 1,2,3 and 5 which are exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972). as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: DESNZ – Harrow Baseline forecast parts 1 & 2 (EXEMPT) Appendix 2: DESNZ – Harrow Project Plan (EXEMPT) Appendix 3: Grant Funding Agreement (EXEMPT) Appendix 4: Grant Offer Letter Appendix 5: Expression of Interest (EOI) (EXEMPT)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out delivery of a landmark central government grant funded scheme for housing decarbonisation. The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.1 is a 2-year programme with a strict reporting, contractual and milestone delivery framework set by the *Department for Energy Security and Net Zero* (DESNZ).

Following the London Borough of Harrow's successful grant bid for 100% of applied funding, Harrow has been awarded with the highest grant relative to stock size in London – at £2.147m contributing to a contract circa £5.1m of which £2.93m will be co-funding by Harrow to deliver energy efficiency works across over 226 homes. At the time of writing this cabinet report, in principle financial commitment has been provided for the full budget requirement subject to our internal governance process being followed with cabinet approval. The required proof of co-funding has been submitted to DESNZ by our Chief Finance Officer (CFO).

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1.1 Approve the DESNZ 2-year spend profile as set out in appendix 2, which has been submitted to central government together with the Grant Funding Agreement. This spend profile outlines how the council will deliver the SHDF programme to March 2025 across a minimum of 226 homes, incorporating the required approval request to add the £2.147m additional Grant received into the HRA capital programme, specified by DESNZ as £917k in 2023/24 and £1.230m in 2024/25.
- 1.2 Approve the DESNZ specified procurement requirement for the Harrow SHDF programme which incorporates the required delegated authority for the DESNZ mandatory process approval and identification of the council's delivery partner, completing SHDF milestone 1 of the programme^{1*}. As set out in the procurement plan, through direct appointment on the specialist Fusion 21 decarbonisation framework: ensuring value for money and a fair and transparent process by selecting the highest-ranked contractor on LOT 1 of the pre-evaluated framework.
- 1.3 Delegate Authority to Corporate Director of Place following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources and the Director of Finance to finalise the award of contract.

Reason: (for recommendations)

The delivery of the SHDF programme will enable the Council to:

- Meet critical Harrow climate emergency directives and central government energy efficiency targets contributing to the roadmap to Net Zero, by achieving a minimum EPC rating of C using a fabric-first approach across all homes on the SHDF wave 2.1 programme

^{1*} SHDF milestone summary in part 3.1 of this report

- Meet all statutory delivery milestones set by DESNZ for the specified delivery window for implementation, as set out in Table 9 of the bid.
- Meet the spend profile requirement as set out by DESNZ – in ANNEX 6 of the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) which stipulates 42.7% of the Grant Funding it received in the 2023-24 Financial Year and 57.3% in 2024/25. Crucially, this can only be achieved by the approved procurement plan to identify the Harrow delivery partner in the month of May 2023. This will allow for contract proceedings in June, abiding by timescales for delivery which have been set by DESNZ with full programme completion on-site required by March 2025. This process follows the comprehensive Harrow KPI submission to DESNZ in April 2023, allowing for crucial May 2023 cabinet approval.

Section 2 – SHDF 2.1 programme

Options considered

(a) Do Nothing: The London Borough of Harrow will not be able to meet the central government set reporting framework, and will therefore lose grant funding and terminate proceedings with the SHDF wave 2.1 programme.

(b) Approve parts 1.1, and 1.2 in section 1 of this cabinet report: This is the recommended option as it will enable the London Borough of Harrow to deliver the landmark project, taking full advantage of the awarded grant funding to deliver a best value programme together with the specified SHDF delivery partner as set out by DESNZ.

1.0 Background

1.1 Fossil Fuels

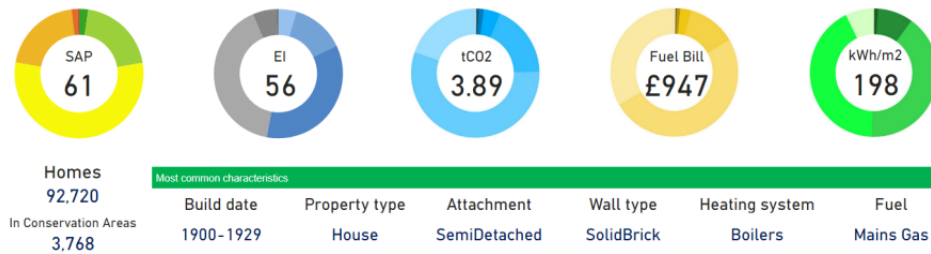
Burning coal, gas and oil (together known as fossil fuels) is increasing the concentration of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere, causing a global temperature rise and significant disruption to our climate. The UK government has set a target for social housing providers to attain the minimum rating of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C for rented properties by 2035 (2030 for 'fuel poor' households). This is an important milestone towards the longer term, and much more ambitious and challenging aspiration, to make all homes 'net-zero-carbon' by 2050

1.2 Benchmark energy performance

According to the 2019 English House Condition Survey, the average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of the social housing stock in England and Wales is 68.4, with 44% of dwellings having an energy efficiency rating below EPC C (SAP 69). The *Pathways* report summary for the London Borough of Harrow shows the following baseline figures in the table below:

Chart 1 - Harrow - Pathways

Baseline Summary - Averages



1.3 Key Decision background

Following the Harrow Climate Emergency Declaration previously referred to Cabinet in September 2019, a key decision related to the scale and pace of transformation was identified across both the organisation and the borough as a whole in order to address the 2030 target date for carbon neutrality. The SHDF wave 2.1 programme provides a significant opportunity to address this requirement across our housing stock commencing in 2023/24.

1.4 Stock Summary

Harrow Council owns circa 4,800 homes, which are managed through its Housing Revenue Account (HRA).² This equates to approximately 5% of total stock in the borough.³ The Council also manages circa 1,200 leasehold properties (largely former Council owned flats sold under the Right to Buy), nearly 800 garages and 11 community centres.

1.5 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) will upgrade low energy efficient social housing stock currently below Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C up to that standard. It will support the installation of energy performance measures in social homes in England, and help:

- deliver warm, energy efficient homes
- reduce carbon emissions
- tackle fuel poverty
- support green jobs
- develop the retrofit sector
- improve the comfort, health and well-being of social housing tenants

SHDF is a £3.8bn 2019 Conservative manifesto commitment over a 10-year period to improve the energy performance of social rented homes, on the pathway to Net Zero 2050.

The Wave 2.1 competition will allocate up to £800 million of funding to support the installation of energy performance measures in social homes in England.

The SHDF Wave 2.1 competition closed to applications on 18 November 2022.

DESNZ makes the Grant to the Grant Recipient (London Borough of Harrow) for the provision of SHDF Wave 2.1, on the basis of the Grant Recipient's successful grant application.

1.6 Application Process

The London Borough of Harrow completed the prerequisite PAS2035 energy surveys and the full SHDF wave 2.1 application process in November 2022. The included board sign-off and in principal financial approval in November as per appendix K of the required application submission stipulated by DESNZ.

1.7 Ambition | Strategic approach

As part of the council's SHDF wave 2.1 application, the Council set out an ambitious retrofit plan. This included the planned upgrade of 100% of its poorly performing BISF archetype non-traditional housing stock of the approved decarbonisation roadmap. This will see the remainder of 97 BISF properties whole-house retrofitted with fabric first measures and Solar PV, to achieve EPC Band C and above over the next 2 financial years of delivery. The programme includes Capital funding for windows, roofs, doors and ventilation to be delivered in parallel with Bid measures.

1.8 Outcome

The result of Harrow's successful strategy is the largest SHDF wave grant allocation in London relative to stock size, which represents a landmark achievement for a delivery programme across housing decarbonisation. This is testament to a vision and strategy for implementation which has already seen success with two previous housing decarbonisation grants in 2022/24 and 2023/24 across both LAD2 and LAD3 HUG1 with our current GLA contract.

2.0 Delivering our objectives

2.1 Key decision making and implementation of SHDF wave 2.1 will enable Harrow to meet energy performance targets at both local and national level.

2.2 Approved Grant Measures

Harrow's SHDF implementation strategy sets out a clear delivery pathway submitted to DESNZ, with a grant fund bid to support delivery of the following energy efficiency measures:

Table 1 – measures

Measure	Number of homes with measures
Loft Insulation	226
Cavity Wall Insulation	129
Underfloor Insulation	142
External Wall Insulation	97
Solar PV	36
Draughtproofing	226
Additional funding	
Ventilation	226

Secondary measures: Windows, Doors, Roofs up to 226

2.3 **Changing the way we work**

Our SHDF implementation strategy provides a new dimension for asset management, changing the way we work and how we develop the 30-year Business Plan. We achieve this with a parallel HRA capital investment plan for whole-house retrofit. This will see an approved budget of secondary energy efficiency measures across windows, doors and roof refurbishments. This strategy will allow us to really target where investment is needed, supporting value for money and resident satisfaction.

2.4 **PAS2035 (Energy Assessment, Design coordination) Process**

A crucial aspect of SHDF programme implementation is the approved PAS2035 process which commenced as part of the DESNZ submitted profile for Ancillary costs. This follows the key DESNZ requirement for completing PAS2035 surveys across the 226 homes identified, further to the assessments which were approved as part of the November 2022 bid. Following completion of full internal governance processes in 2022, the Council commissioned Pellings LLP to undertake the initial retrofit coordinator role ahead of appointment of our main delivery partner as per paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 (page 2) of this report.

2.5 **KPI submission to central government**

To ensure successful deliver of the SHDF wave 2.1 programme, the following documents and KPIs have already been submitted to DESNZ:

- Full checklist – including Baseline projections for the entire 2-year programme (Appendix 1 parts 1 and 2)
- Fraud Risk Assessment
- Programme risk assessment
- Grant Funding Agreement – for co-signing
- Grant Offer Letter – for co-signing
- Full bank details provision – approved and signed by CFO
- Full project plan (Appendix 2)
- Oracle financial systems form completed
- Proof of funding

2.6 **Submission to Fusion 21 Framework**

Further to point 2.5 The following documents have been submitted for LOT1 Fusion21 direct appointment briefing, EOI and evaluation

- Project brief
- Full property listing for programme
- Number of measures approved in bid (Table 1 part 2.2)

2.7 **Internal review**

The following documents have been reviewed by the procurement business partner in April 2023:

- Full specifications for all energy efficiency measures proposed
- Full contractor EOI responses
- Fusion 21-member framework evaluation with ranked contractors
- Approved project plan

2.7 **Best practice**

We will seek to adopt a comprehensive set of new best practice across housing decarbonisation, leading with national standards for *implementation, innovation, and delivery*. A testament to this work is the April 2023 Harrow case study which represents the first transparent solar glass application in the UK for social housing. The concept has been showcased at the Grand Designs LIVE 2023 exhibition (London Excel) in partnership with Polysolar technology.

2.8 **Fuel Poverty**

We are actively dealing with Fuel poverty through the SHDF programme which will reduce bills as a result of measure implementation. This follows a recent influx fuel poverty referral which we are addressing as part of our wider housing decarbonisation programme.

2.9 **Summary objectives of whole-house retrofit**

The SHDF programme will be addressing key performance objectives across the following areas:

- Damp & Mould: Through fabric first intervention, improved insulation and smart ventilation across homes, minimising Health & Safety risk.
- Comfort and wellbeing: Warmer and better insulated homes which provide enhanced living environments with enhanced ambient temperature management across winter and summer extremes.
- Fuel Poverty – tangible bill reduction following programme of energy efficiency measures.
- Carbon reduction – through whole house retrofit
- Renewable energy integration – solar PV installation across multiple homes

- Environmental control – through sensors which can remotely monitor humidity, temperature and carbon dioxide emissions, informing of multiple indicators for decarbonisation

2.10 Resident engagement summary

Our Resident Engagement Strategy for SHDF delivery provides an active approach to management with a project lead role that maintains regular contact with our key stakeholders – our residents. This includes a focus on the often-neglected management of tariffs to achieve practical outcomes with addressing fuel poverty. The ambition for the borough is for “*great customer experiences and community outcomes*”. It is important that we layer in the customer experience throughout the delivery of the SHDF programme.

3.0 Measuring Performance – include relevant KPI’s and performance against them

3.1 SHDF Milestones

Performance management is a critical aspect of the SHDF programme and follows a delivery framework with KPI’s set by central government. In the first instance, these consist of 9 base milestones as per table 9 of the bid:

Table 2 - Milestones

Milestone
MS1 - Project Team Established
MS2 - Procurement Activity Completed
MS3 - Pre-construction Tenant Engagement Completed
MS4 - PAS2035 Risk Assessment Stage Completed
MS5 - Dwelling Assessment Stage Completed
MS6 - Design & Coordination Stage Completed
MS7 & MS8 - Installation Stage Started & Completed
MS9 - Handover and Data Lodgement Completed

3.2 Statutory spend profile

DESNZ have profiled an agreed outputs profile as stipulated in ANNEX 6 of the Grant Funding Agreement (GLA), as follows:

*The Grant Recipient is required to achieve the following milestones and performance measures in connection with the Grant:
Agreed Outputs 1.*

- *Grant Recipient is to have spent approximately 42.7% of the Grant Funding it received in the 2023-24 Financial Year by the end of that Financial Year on the Funded Activities. 2.*
- *Grant Recipient is to have spent approximately 57.3% of the Grant Funding it received in the 2024-25 Financial Year by the end of that Financial Year on the Funded Activities.*

3.3 Energy efficiency measure performance

A crucial aspect of the funding requirement. This specifically relates to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to achieve EPC C with all homes

with a space heat demand below 90 kWh/m²/yr, where possible and cost effective.

All modelling has been undertaken in Reduce Data Standard Assessment Procedure (RdSAP), using the Elmhurst Platform.

3.4 Stock upgrade – Scope

The SHDF programme will upgrade a significant amount of the social housing stock, delivering warm, energy-efficient homes, reducing carbon emissions and fuel bills, tackling fuel poverty, and supporting green jobs. Performance across each element is quantifiable based on the SHDF reporting mechanism. The PAS2035 process is also a key KPI in this area as it stipulates the calculated requirement for achieving the energy performance objective per dwelling, culminating in lodgement.

3.5 Levels of Decency

A key aspect which strengthened the successful London Borough of Harrow grant bid was the HRA commitment to run a parallel planned investment programmes for windows, doors and roofs refurbishment. Apart from the clear benefits which include:

- Aiding whole-house retrofit with the application of secondary measures such as with window refurbishment carried out together with SHDF funded External Wall Insulation (EWI).
- Minimising resident disturbance and ensuring a best value by packaging works with a more holistic approach retrofit.

A key deliverable will be the resulting impact on *Decency (Decent Homes Standard reporting)*, with works that address both low energy efficient **and** non-decent dwellings through whole-house retrofit.

3.6 Health & Safety benefits

Damp and Mould - The SHDF programme will directly address the causes of damp and mould by effective appraisal, and an approved grant funded work plan that includes:

- Insulation improvements (Cavity | loft | underfloor | External Wall Insulation)
- Ventilation upgrades including smart ventilation (Combating damp and mould and improving air quality with a positive impact to occupant's health, filtering large pollen particles and reducing the impact of household products that emit volatile organic compounds (VOCS).
- Draughtproofing (to maximise energy efficiency)
- Environmental sensors with remote monitoring (of damp, humidity, temperature, carbon dioxide)

3.7 Project Plan | baseline

The specific targets and milestones of DESNZ programme reporting which must abide with the full project plan and submitted baseline (Appendix 1 parts 1 and 2)

4.0 Environmental Issues for project delivery

4.1 The SHDF programme directly addresses environmental issues in a more comprehensive and targeted manner than any former HRA housing capital programme. The grant funded baseline measures and programme will address all of the following without exception:

- **Tackle fuel poverty** by increasing low-income household's energy efficiency rating and therefore reducing their energy bills.
- **Support clean growth** and ensure homes are thermally comfortable, efficient, and well-adapted to climate change.
- **Support economic resilience and a green recovery** in response to the economic impacts of Covid-19, creating thousands of jobs; and
- **Learn from the delivery experience** to inform the development and design of further energy efficiency and heat schemes.
- **Reduce carbon emissions** from homes within our boroughs, directly contributing to addressing the declared climate emergency.

4.2 Fundamental environmental requirements

For the measures proposed, environmental requirements are clearly outlined in part 17 of the *Grant Funding Agreement* submitted to DESNZ:

The Grant Recipient shall perform the Funded Activities in accordance with the Authority's environmental policy, which is to conserve energy, water, wood, paper, and other resources, reduce waste and phase out the use of ozone depleting substances and minimise the release of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds and other substances damaging to health and the environment.

The Grant Recipient shall pay due regard to the use of recycled products, so long as they are not detrimental to the provision of the Funded Activities or the environment, to include the use of all packaging, which should be capable of recovery for re-use or recycling.

The Grant Recipient shall take all possible precautions to ensure that any equipment and materials used in the provision of the Funded Activities do not contain chlorofluorocarbons, halons, or any other damaging substances, unless unavoidable, in which case the Authority shall be notified in advance of their use. The Grant Recipient shall endeavour to reduce fuel emissions wherever possible.

5.0 Data Protection Implications

5.1 Processing of personal data

All personal data processed in connection with the SHDF programme Strategy, and any related procurement will be carried out in full compliance with data protection laws including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

5.2 Data Sharing Agreement

Please refer to the signed Data Sharing Agreement as submitted to DESNZ.

6.0 Risk Management Implications

6.1 Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **Yes**

Separate risk-register in place? **Yes**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **Yes**

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
If the recommendations are not accepted the Council will be unable to receive grant funding from the DESNZ for the SHDF wave 2.1 programme in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The report sets out a process by which this risk can be mitigated	GREEN
The SHDF Wave 2.1 implementation strategy fails to effectively achieve its objectives and/or within the envisaged timescale for the Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Project Board in place to monitor the strategy▪ Approved government project plan and project baseline in place▪ Milestones have been set for the strategy by both the Council and the government and these will be closely monitored	GREEN
The SHDF Wave 2.1 Programme runs significantly over budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work proactively with the finance business partner to ensure timeline monthly audit reporting on a measure-by-measure basis both internally and externally to the government• Forecasts and actuals allow for contingency planning. Planning is engaged where required such as for External Wall Insulation (EWI)	AMBER

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowances for possible supply chain shortages and material costs have been factored into the budget • Learning curve benefits have been obtained via undertaking a previous energy efficiency Programme (ECO1-2) and this will help us control the budget 	
The approximate 40/60 required spend profile between the Council and the government respectively is not met and is significantly off-target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works will not be instructed if an overspend is identified/predicted as being off-target, e.g. changes in market conditions • Underspends can in exceptional circumstances be negotiated with the government to enable these to be redirected into the project 	AMBER
The resident engagement strategy is unsuccessful leading to resident dissatisfaction and opposition to the Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Works will be coordinated in a manner which minimizes disturbance on a resident-by-resident basis ▪ Vulnerable residents are prioritised and we will work closely with them and there is a contingency plan in place for this ▪ This area of resident concern and vulnerability is specifically overseen by the Project Board ▪ Resident feedback is closely monitored 	GREEN
Fraud occurs in delivery of the SHDF programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A programme risk register (including the risk of fraud) has been submitted and reviewed by central government and will be regularly reviewed and updated during the Programme • Members of the Project Team have received fraud awareness training • A specific fraud risk register is also in place and submitted and reviewed by central government and this will also be regularly reviewed and updated for the risk of fraud during the Programme 	AMBER
SHDF programme fails to adhere to DESNZ processes and risks loss of grant allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline project forecast and project plan are monitored regularly on a monthly basis to oversee adherence • The Fusion21 agreement also ensures adherence to the agreed project milestones with the nominated delivery partner • Supply chain and material resources are fully accounted for by the framework evaluation process on a contractor-by-contractor basis 	AMBER

<p>VFM not achieved for programme through delivery partner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement selects top ranked contractor from pre-evaluation framework • Assessment process ensures VFM via the following: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Delivery partner must adhere to the government submitted spend profile ➢ Spend profile forms part of the contractual agreement with the Partner ➢ Spend profile is stipulated in the grant funding agreement which must be adhered to and is non-negotiable 	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Failure to Meet statutory requirements and KPIs sent by DESNZ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project Lead role ensures a fully documented timeline and central government checklist, with feedback showing compliance access every set KPI. • DESNZ facilitates monthly review and audit to ensure completion of all 9 milestones. 	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Failure to improve energy efficiency of homes on programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PAS2035 process regulates the action to be taken on a dwelling-by-dwelling basis. • Contractors of the Fusion21 framework are Trustmark Accredited. • Energy Lodgement process ensures outcomes. 	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Failure to ensure effective investment in our assets for whole-house retrofit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement must agree with the set and agreed central government grant funded measures, as documented in Harrow's successful grant bid. • The delivery partner must abide to set criteria for pricing that is in agreement with the central government submitted baseline forecast. • Whole-house retrofit must be conducted to the highest standards following the specifications, "validated" by way of SAP EPC scoring for before and after completion 	<p>AMBER</p>

7.0 Procurement Implications

7.1 Consultation overview

This report has been compiled following consultation with the procurement business partner, outlining recommendations to ensure

timely implementation of the central government grant funded SHDF programme.

7.2 **Adherence to central government process**

Procurement options must support the specific central government targets and contractual (Grant Funding Agreement) obligations for programme delivery across 2023/24 to 2024/25. This specifically relates to the framework imposed by central government relating to:

- monthly audit and monitoring
- grant drawdown process
- delivery partner milestones which must abide by baseline forecast submitted to DESNZ
- Implementation plan to baseline + agreed delivery milestones
- Agreed spending requirement and profile for the specific measures identified in table 6.

Negotiation

The project attributes in part 7.2 differentiate the SHDF programme from more traditional procurement routes for projects which are not subject to external governmental audit. The *Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)* has provided a non-negotiable stance as follows, stipulated by DESNZ:

The GFA and associated documents have undergone a rigorous approval process by our legal and commercial teams. In addition, a draft copy of the GFA was uploaded to our competition web page in August 2022, giving applicants the ability to provide suggestions on content which have already been considered.

7.3 **Procurement through the specialist Fusion 21 decarbonisation framework**

The Framework was subject to an 'Open' procurement procedure in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

Rigorous assessment of supplier capability and ability to performance the scope of services was undertaken, key selection criteria included:

- Business and professional standing
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Financial capability
- Experience of delivery
- Past performance

The award criteria for successful suppliers was based on an evaluation model of technical and commercial evidence.

Table 4 showing Technical Assessment and Commercial Assessment

Technical Assessment	
Approach to service delivery: evidence based demonstration of the ability to deliver the scope of services through case studies showing the project scope, the size of the project and duration, how resources were deployed and evidence of successful delivery.	30%
Health, Safety and Wellbeing.	10%
Critical Success Factors & Project Risk	10%
Added Value and USP.	10%
Social Value: creating social impact and positive outcomes for Members through contract delivery	10%
Total	70%

Commercial Assessment	
Cost models based on hourly and day rates for a range of disciplines and expertise	30%
Variety of project values against RIBA stages	
Total	30%

7.4 Intended Works | Delivery Partner Accreditations

Works approach based upon ‘whole house’ retrofit measures to PAS2035:2019 standards to domestic dwellings and any other property and related assets owned, rented, leased by any of the Contracting Authorities who may use this framework, or on property and related assets in which any of the Contracting Authorities may have an interest at the time or prospectively.

Intended works cover, but are not limited to:

- Whole house retrofit
- Fabric measures
- Renewable heating technologies
- Solar photovoltaic and battery storage systems
- Improvement works

Supplier Accreditations and Standards

- PAS2035:2019 Standards
- PAS2030:2019 Accredited supply chain
- Trustmark registered supply chain
- Microgeneration certification scheme (MCS)
- Gas Safe
- Electrical safety scheme

7.4 The recommended procurement route

Identified for the fulfilment of DESNZ KPI’s was direct appointment on LOT1. Our work has been supported by the procurement business

partner and the Fusion 21 Framework Manager (Construction and Decarbonisation).

7.5 Process Summary | Value for money

A competitive and best-value process has been carried out through a combination of Expression of Interest and supporting evaluation across a scored, ranked and evaluated 21-strong contractor LOT.

7.6 Selection

A secondary evaluation phase ensuring a fair and transparent selection process has been actioned for the 7 contractors who have expressed interest in Table 5 below (commercial sensitive)

This phase incorporated further assurance regarding adherence to the DESNZ submitted baseline forecast, specifically relating to:

- a) Available resource to contract-manage HRA capital windows and doors in parallel with SHDF funded measures
- b) Adherence to time restraints and the DESNZ defined reporting framework
- c) Mobilisation resource provision from 4, 6 or 8 weeks
- d) Principal contacts identified if not on initial submission

7.7 Delivery Partner

We have adhered by the framework evaluation process with set responses required by all contractors who have expressed interest and submitted the initial evaluation questions. Following the secondary phase review outlined in part 7.6, the requirement to abide by the framework selection process is based on the highest-ranking contractor being selected from the Fusion 21 LOT1. Formal acceptance will be subject to the required pre-contract agreement to pricing schedules, DESNZ baseline, agreed milestones, prelims and fees. We will follow the Fusion 21 standard JCT route (type TBC) for our nominated delivery partner (preferred bidder) with provision of contractual review with agreed clauses and appendices ahead of contract agreement and sealing.

7.8 Completion

Contract sealing is scheduled for June to July 2023, in line with the agreed project timescales submitted to central government as well as the baseline forecast for works to commence on-site in August 2023.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Contractual obligations

The SHDF programme has stipulated a robust contractual process for delivery across the country. The London Borough of Harrow has completed the prerequisite review and submission of the Grant Funding Agreement, Grant Offer Letter and Data Sharing Agreement. This process was aided by the principal lawyer who provided the

necessary advice and guidance for submission ahead of signature approval by the Director of Housing and Director of Finance.

As stipulated by central government (DESNZ), we have completed the required agreement and returned as per the timeframes stipulated for April 2023.

Is there an opportunity to change the content of the GFA?

The GFA and associated documents have undergone a rigorous approval process by our legal and commercial teams. In addition, a draft copy of the GFA was uploaded to our competition web page in August 2022, giving applicants the ability to provide suggestions on content which have already been considered. As a result, it is not possible to make amendments and the GFA can only be shared in a PDF format. If this presents an issue and the signing process is difficult to achieve within the timeline specified, please contact us. The GFA and accompanying guidance documents will clearly signpost via highlighted fields where BEIS requires the input of information from you.

8.2 Statutory Powers

The council has various statutory powers and duties in relation to the development, provision, and maintenance of housing and related matters, including pursuant to:

- 8.1.1 Housing Act 1985
- 8.1.2 Housing Act 1996
- 8.1.3 Housing Act 2004
- 8.1.4 Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- 8.1.5 The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended)
- 8.1.6 The Town & Country Planning Act 1990
- 8.1.7 The General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011
- 8.1.8 Section 111(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 which gives a local authority the power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

8.3 Compliance summary

All procurement relating to the implementation of the SHDF programme must comply with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the council's Contract Procedure Rules.

8.4 Contract schedule

We plan to engage with our nominated legal representative in June to July 2023 in readiness of contract sealing with our nominated delivery partner (preferred bidder). This schedule will ensure adherence to the submitted central government baseline forecast.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 **Proof of funding KPI**

A key requirement of SHDF programme grant approval is *proof of funding*. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) has validated the proof of funding requirement to DESNZ in April 2023, confirming the total amount of co-funding agreed in principle as stipulated in table 15 of our bid to a value of £2.93m, ensuring SHDF wave 2.1 delivery across the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

This funding is the Council's contribution (co-funding) in addition to the agreed grant allocation of £2.147m provided by DESNZ.

To support the project and its partners, the London Borough of Harrow has an approved housing decarbonisation budget allocation across the three years of the current MTFS. The full co-funding requirement (£2.93m) is derived from this budget. The project will be fully supported by our Finance Business Partner working alongside the Project Lead: Strategy & Programme who heads the SHDF project team, is the budget holder for housing decarbonisation and is responsible for allocation of projects.

In conclusion, the London Borough of Harrow is fully committed to SHDF wave 2.1 programme delivery, co-funding 100% of the agreed amount stipulated above, subject to cabinet approval.

9.2 **Budget Approval**

The Housing decarbonisation budget has been approved for two predominant grant funded schemes and four additional Harrow funded schemes:

- 1) the GLA LAD3 HUG1
- 2) SHDF wave 2.1 which this report is concerned with
- 3) non-grant schemes which have budget approval

The below table provides the summary of the current approved housing decarbonisation schemes including SHDF wave 2.1

Table 6 – Approved budget

HRA Capital programme		Commitments- External	Commitments- External	Commitments- Internal	Uncommitted
		LAD3 HUG1	SHDF	Harrow	
Approved Funding 22/23	£1,000,000.00	£209,320.33			£790,679.67
Additions: GLA LAD3 HUG1 grant	£408,640.67	£408,640.67			£0.00
Total funding 31/03/23	£1,408,640.67	£617,961.00	£0.00	£0.00	£790,679.67
2023/24 cap programme					
Approved Funding 23/24	£1,000,000.00		£1,112,022.25		-£112,022.25
*Additions: DESNZ SHDF	£917,379.53		£917,379.53		£0.00
Additional -22/23 cfwd	£1,000,000.00			£170,000.00	£830,000.00
	£2,917,379.53	£0.00	£2,029,401.78	£170,000.00	£717,977.75
2024/25 cap programme					
Approved Funding 24/25	£1,000,000.00		£1,813,977.75		-£813,977.75
*Additions: DESNZ SHDF	£1,230,124.47		£1,230,124.47		£0.00
	£2,230,124.47	£0.00	£3,044,102.22	£0.00	-£813,977.75
Total resources over 2 years	£6,556,144.67	£617,961.00	£5,073,504.00	£170,000.00	£694,679.67
*to be added to the capital programme-cabinet report May 2023					

- 9.3 The 5-year HRA capital programme was set as part of the Housing Revenue Account Budget (HRA) 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-25 to 2025-26; approved by Cabinet in February 2023. At this time, the SHDF bid grant level was unknown. The HRA cabinet report included an allocation within the HRA capital programme to take advantage of Government grant funding opportunities and match fund Retrofit for carbon reduction measures, set at £1m per annum for years 2023-24 to 2026-27 then £3.0m in 2027-28, at a total investment of £7m.
- 9.4 This report requests the addition of the £2.147m SHDF grant (£917k in 2023/24 and £1.230m in 2024/25) into the HRA capital programme, and confirms the supporting £2.926m to match fund the above allocation is already available within the current approved capital programme. This will result in total resources of £5.073m available to fund the SHDF scheme over the 2-year period to march 2025.
- 9.5 The grant conditions stipulate that approximately 40% of total resources will be required to be spent in 2023/24 and 60% in 2024/25 with no carry forward of unspent allocations into future years. The service is currently reviewing the delivery profile to ensure maximum use of the grant funding is achieved.
- 9.6 The service will monitor this scheme closely and report progress on the scheme through the councils' normal budget monitoring process.
- 9.7 There is no impact on the General fund as a result of this addition to the HRA capital programme.

10.0 Equalities Implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

10.1 Continuity

The SHDF wave 2.1 programme, including the identification of the Harrow delivery partner will align with existing policies and strategies maintaining the current level of equality in service provision. Contract specifications will be very clear on the equalities related duties on contractors, given the wide range of needs of our customers.

10.3 **Social Value | Fuel Poverty | Vulnerable residents**

A critical and unique factor of the SHDF programme is the resulting social value benefits that target households which are experiencing fuel poverty. The consultation phase accounts for the needs of all resident groups, including more vulnerable groups through the provision of:

- Tariff Management advice
- Measures which directly impact a reduction in bills
- Improved lifestyle management across resident groupings, addressed through improve ventilation and environmental sensors forming part of the specification of works
- The provision of warmer, comfortable and more energy efficiency living spaces

10.3 **Assessment**

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared specific to the SHDF programme. All opportunities to address diversity- particularly vulnerability for all tenants has been addressed through the provision of energy efficiency measures and specifications that ensure residents receive the same service regardless of but taking into account specific needs. The preferred bidder (Harrow delivery partner) will be tasked with the delivery of central government agreed measures which focus on whole-house retrofit across a diverse breakdown of residents.

11.0 **Council Priorities**

The SHDF wave 2.1 programme will ensure all Council priorities are met by delivering an approach that 1. Puts residents first 2. Supports a clean and safe Borough 3. Facilitates support for those most in need. This will be achieved with the following:

11.1 **Ensuring compliance and mitigating health and safety risk**

As highlighted in part 3.6, this is achieved through the PAS2035 coordinator role which will ensure a package of energy efficiency measures that create safer, warmer, and more comfortable living spaces. Digital Environmental sensors will ensure monitoring post-works.

11.2 **Maintaining decency and improving infrastructure**

Residents will benefit from whole-house retrofit, extending the life of the dwelling envelop while improving decency with a contract that delivers window, roof and door replacements across the two year contract. Windows and door replacements have the option to be contract managed by the SHDF delivery partner, thereby ensuring a full

package of works are delivered, minimising disturbance to residents across the 30-year business plan.

11.3 Moving towards a 60/40 split for capital and revenue with an active asset management approach

The scope and specification of SHDF measures are intended to deliver a whole-house approach, commencing with fabric-first measures. This approach together with the HRA investment for key elements of disrepair (11.2) will support the move towards a 60/40 split by reducing repair costs across the 30-year business plan.

11.4 Improving the environment and addressing climate change

SHDF wave 2.1 will directly address the national retrofit agenda to bring homes to a comfortable home standard, eliminating damp and mould. Energy efficiency upgrades will reduce carbon emissions and save residents money, making homes more affordable to comfortably operate.

11.5 Tackling poverty and inequality /Addressing health and social care inequality

Helping to eliminate fuel poverty for households results in community wealth generation by reducing the overall impact of heating and fuel costs for residents, as well as draughts, reducing negative impacts on health, hospital admissions, and length of stay. There is a direct correlation between fuel poverty and health, as evidenced by the previous COVID-19 outbreak, which was felt most severely by communities known to have higher fuel poverty rates.

11.6 Delivering Social Value

The SHDF programme delivers immense social value benefits through the application of new technology which is designed to improve overall comfort and wellbeing both inside and out of the home. Our PAS2035 coordinator will support this effort and apprenticeships for those looking to upskill or move into the green economy.

Upskilling

Opportunities include collaboration between Harrow Council, The Retrofit Academy, Pellings and our future retrofit delivery contractors to reach out to local schools/colleges/etc. This would involve engaging school leavers with sign posting career pathways, work placements, workshops and mock interviews.

Trainee roles

We will review with a programme of upskilling with the Retrofit Academy, for the resident engagement elements on the project team.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Tasleem Kazmi
Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 09/05/2023

Statutory Officer: Stephen Dorrian
Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 04/05/2023

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta
Signed off by the Head of Procurement
Date: 05/05/2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns
Signed off on behalf the Head of Internal Audit
Date: 10/05/2023

Chief Officer: Dipti Patel
Signed off by the Corporate Director Community
Date: 11/05/2023

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out: YES – A specific SHDF EqIA has been completed.
EqIA cleared by: (DETG) Chair

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Harrow Contact: Andres Shoman, Project Lead: Strategy & Programme, Andres.Shoman@harrow.gov.uk, Work number: 07591655326

Background Papers: Data Sharing Agreement

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO



20.03.2023

London Borough of Harrow, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1
2XF

Dear London Borough of Harrow

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – Wave 2.1

1. The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (referred to in this letter as “**We**”/ “**Us**”/ “**Our**”), offers London Borough of Harrow (referred to in this letter as “**You**”/ “**Your**”) a grant (“**Grant**”) subject to Your agreement to, and compliance with, the terms and conditions set out or referred to in this letter, its Appendices and Schedules. These terms and conditions should be read in conjunction with the standard terms and conditions in the Grant Funding Agreement and accompanying Annexes issued by Us (the “**Grant Funding Agreement**”), which together comprise the “Agreement” on which the Grant is given by Us to You.
2. This offer is made pursuant to Your successful application in the recent call ‘Apply for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund: Wave 2.1’, first published 8th June 2022 and found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-housing-decarbonisation-fund-wave-2>.
3. The Grant is offered under Section 98 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (“NERC”).

Amount of Grant

4. The maximum amount of Grant offered is up to £2,147,504.00 (Two Million One Hundred and Forty Seven Thousand Five Hundred and Four Pounds & 00p) for the period ending 31 March 2025. This is the total amount of Grant that We may pay and this amount will not be increased as a result of any overspend or otherwise.

This will be paid as follows:

- a) up to £917,379.53 (nine hundred and seventeen thousand, three hundred and seventy nine pounds and 53p) in financial year ending on 31 March 2024 and
- b) up to £1,230,124.47 (one million, two hundred and thirty thousand, one hundred and twenty four pounds and 47p) in financial year ending on 31 March 2025.

Purpose of Grant

5. The Grant is offered to You to contribute to certain expenditure (see paragraphs 14 to 15) (“**Eligible Expenditure**”) where that expenditure is reasonably incurred by You in undertaking a significant upgrade of the social housing stock currently below, and on an ‘infill’ basis at or above, EPC Band C up to that standard; delivering warm, energy-efficient homes, reducing carbon emissions and fuel bills, tackling fuel poverty, and supporting green jobs (“**the Funded Activities**”). The Grant is for capital use.
6. A description of the Funded Activities is set out in **Annex 2** to the Grant Funding Agreement.

Eligible Expenditure

7. Subject to paragraphs 15 and 16, the Eligible Expenditure is limited to the costs specified in **Annex 5** to the Grant Funding Agreement.
8. Under no circumstances may the Grant be claimed or used to cover any Ineligible Expenditure listed in paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 of the Grant Funding Agreement or to cover costs incurred for those purposes (and any such costs do not constitute Eligible Expenditure for the purposes of this letter). The Eligible Expenditure must be kept to the minimum for the efficient conduct of the Funded Activities, and expenditure that We reasonably determine to be in excess of that amount does not constitute Eligible Expenditure.

Funding Period

9. The Eligible Expenditure for which the Grant is awarded is expenditure limited to costs which are incurred between the date You sign this letter and 31 March 2025.

Expenditure Prior to Funding Period

10. Notwithstanding Paragraphs 12–16 above and the definition of Funding Period, the Outputs at **Annex 6** to the Grant Funding Agreement allow for certain expenditure that would be Eligible Expenditure if it was incurred during the Funding Period to be accounted for in your Co-Funding arrangements. This will only apply to projects started after Competition Launch (as it is defined in the Grant Funding Agreement).
11. We make no representations, promises, guarantees, or warranties that any expenditure incurred before the Funding Period will be taken into account as if incurred under the Grant Funding Agreement for the purposes of Co-Funding. Expenditure prior to the Grant Funding Agreement and Funding Period will not be reimbursed and is made entirely at your own risk.

Payment of Grant

12. The Grant will be paid in accordance with the instalments in **Annex 3 and with the Grant Payment Process in Annex 11** to the Grant Funding

Agreement, upon receipt from You of a Grant Drawdown Request in the form set out in Appendix 1 to this letter.

Accountable Officer

13. You must appoint a person (the “Accountable Officer”) responsible for ensuring that You use the Grant in compliance with the Agreement and notify Us of the identity of the Accountable Officer. We must approve the appointment of any person who is not the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Financial Officer.
14. The Accountable Officer must maintain oversight of Your use of the Grant and:
 - a) safeguard, control and ensure the efficient, economical, and effective management of the Grant;
 - b) advise You on the discharge of Your responsibilities under the Agreement and under any subsequent terms and conditions agreed by You and Us, or any guidance or other information notified by Us;
 - c) ensure that principles of probity, robust governance, transparency, and value for money are maintained at all times in relation to the Grant;
 - d) be responsible for signing the accounts relating to the Grant, ensuring that they are properly prepared and presented and that proper accounting records are maintained in a form that complies with generally accepted accounting practices to which You are subject; and
 - e) ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided.

Grant Drawdown Requests

15. Your Grant Drawdown Request[s] must include the following:
 - a) the information and evidence required for the relevant instalment in paragraph 4 of the Grant Funding Agreement in accordance with the process set out in Annex 11 to the Grant Funding Agreement; and
 - b) an accompanying invoice containing the Purchase Order number and amount being claimed for that Instalment Period.

Conditions Precedent

16. The offer of Grant is conditional on You providing Us with the following:
 - a) the completed and signed form in Annex 4 of the Grant Funding Agreement confirming Your bank details and the details of Your signatories;
 - b) evidence showing that an Accountable Officer has been appointed;
 - c) a completed and signed Data Sharing Agreement;

- d) At this point we have no further questions on your subsidy position. Communications will be provided in due course with relation to the requirements on disclosing grant awards on the Transparency Index. You are however required to complete the Small Amounts of Funding Exemption (Ref Annex 10, Grant Funding Agreement) on behalf of any non-social homes in your bid. If you have no non- social homes, please return the document as a nil return.
 - e) The application form sets out the requirements for the evidence of co-funding, which are as follows: 'Applicants should outline the source of funds for co-funding and are expected to provide evidence of secured co-funding such as board sign off, minutes from meetings or letters of commitment, as annex K. Applicants are required to provide evidence that co-funding has been signed off at CFO level. The co-funding value shown in evidence should match the value input to table 15 of the application form.' Please submit evidence of co-funding that meets these requirements.
 - f) The project plan submitted as Annex F is basic, covering the 9 BEIS milestones but without many associated sub tasks or dependencies. Please review and resubmit a detailed project plan, noting the dates for completion of milestones in the project plan should align with the dates in Table 9 of the supplementary tables document. It was also noted that table 9 itself was only partially completed. Please review and update the project plan, as well as completing the "Project Baseline Template Full" tab in the "GR Checklist & Associated Documents" ensuring that the project plan, milestones and spending estimates are aligned.
 - g) The risk register submitted as Annex G only included risks that were already provided by BEIS, with no further project specific risks added. Please review the document and resubmit with consideration to wider risks that the project may face.
17. The offer of Grant is also conditional on You and Us agreeing an appropriate percentage of the Grant that must be spent in each year of the Funding Period (see **Annex 6** of the Grant Funding Agreement).
18. You must ensure that We receive the information and evidence required above with 30 days of this letter being issued. Should You fail to do so, or should We reasonably conclude that the information and evidence provided prior to that deadline is unsatisfactory, We shall be entitled to withdraw the Grant (and any Grant already paid by then will be repayable with interest).

Subsidy Control

- 19. The Grant Recipient will ensure that delivery of the Funded Activities does not put the Authority in breach of the UK's domestic obligations under the Subsidy Control Act or its international obligations in respect of subsidies.
- 20. The Grant Recipient will maintain appropriate records of compliance with the relevant subsidy control regime and will take all reasonable

steps to assist the Authority to comply with the same and respond to any proceedings or investigation(s) into the Funded Activities by any relevant court or tribunal of relevant jurisdiction or regulatory body.

21. The Grant Recipient acknowledges and represents that the Grant is being awarded on the basis that the Funded Activities being undertaken using the Grant do not affect trade in goods and wholesale electricity between Northern Ireland and the European Union and shall ensure that the Grant is not used in way that affects any such trade.
22. References in this letter to the “**Trade and Cooperation Agreement**” shall have the same meaning as in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Conditions

23. You must comply with the standard terms and conditions set out in the Grant Funding Agreement which apply to this Grant and accompany this letter, in addition to all other requirements set out or referred to in this letter and its Appendices.
24. The standard terms and conditions in the Grant Funding Agreement are amended as follows:

In **paragraph 8.1** of the standard terms and conditions in the Grant Funding Agreement the requirement to provide independent assurance and certification of Grant Drawdown Requests by an independent auditor shall apply to this grant offer letter as follows:

Director’s declaration

Your Grant Drawdown Request[s] must be accompanied by a statement by one of Your directors (or if You are not a company, an officer of equivalent status) in the following terms:

“I confirm that I have considered the information and evidence provided in support of this Grant Drawdown Request, and the terms and conditions of the Grant and that:

- a) the information and evidence is complete, true, and accurate. If I give information which I know is not correct or complete, I understand that action may be taken against me; and
- b) we have complied with the terms and conditions of the Grant.

Reasonable assurance report

On an annual basis you must submit to Us a reasonable assurance report from an independent reporting accountant in the form in **Schedule 1** to this letter.

Accountants: engagement terms

Where an assurance report is required, You must engage the relevant accountant on the terms in **Schedule 2** to this letter. The documentation in

Schedules 1 to 2 is based on templates in Technical Release AAF 01/10 (Framework Document for accountants' reports on grant claims) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). You must not materially modify those terms and conditions without the prior consent in writing of the Secretary of State.

Accountant's payment

Where an assurance report is required, You are responsible for paying the accountant's fees and must not use the Grant to do so.

25. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the Grant Offer Letter and the Grant Funding Agreement, the Grant Offer letter takes precedence.

Publication

26. You will not make any announcement (public or otherwise) that you have been successful in applying for and/or will be awarded grant funding until notified by BEIS that it is permissible to do so. BEIS will endeavour to provide adequate forewarning of relevant publication dates. Where references to successful award is made within routinely published documents (e.g., board minutes), the Grant Recipient is required to notify BEIS. Refer paragraph 24 of the Grant Funding Agreement.

Warranties

27. By signing this Grant Offer Letter, you warrant and represent that:
 - a) Your obligations under the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement are legal, valid, binding, and enforceable;
 - b) all authorisations and consents necessary to enable You to enter into and perform the obligations in the Grant Funding Agreement have been obtained; and
 - c) the person signing Grant documentation is duly authorised to sign on your behalf.
28. Nothing in the Grant Offer Letter, Grant Funding Agreement or the provision of Grant gives or is intended to give rise to contractual relations.

Notices and contact

29. In communicating with Us, Your contact within the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is:

Contact: SHDF Wave 2.1 Delivery Team,
Contact email: shdfwave2.1@beis.gov.uk,
Postal Address : Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 1
Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET, United Kingdom

Duration of offer

30. This offer remains open 30 working days, at which point it expires. If You wish to accept this offer, You must ensure that We receive Your formal acceptance, in full compliance with the acceptance requirements below, on or by that time.

Acceptance

31. If You wish to accept this offer, You must sign and date both copies of the Grant Funding Agreement and the grant offer letter appended to each Grant Funding Agreement and return one signed copy to Us. It must be signed by someone who is authorised to sign on behalf of your organisation. Please provide evidence of their authority to sign and bind your organisation. Please also provide a day to day contact name and email address.


Yours sincerely,

Caroline Withey

Programme Director – Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Agreement

I confirm, for and on behalf of the **London Borough of Harrow**, the agreement of **London Borough of Harrow** to the terms and conditions set out or referred to in this letter and its Appendices and Schedules.

Signed: 

Printed Name:David McNulty.....

Position:Director of Housing.....

Date: 02/05/23

Day to day contact for the Grant:

Name:Andres Shoman.....

Position:Project Lead: Strategy & Programme.....

Email address:andres.shoman@harrow.gov.uk.....

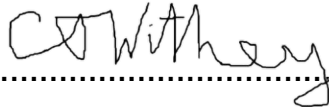
Accountable Officer for the Grant:

Name:Dawn Calvert (Director of Finance).....

Email address:dawn.calvert@harrow.gov.uk.....

BEIS

SIGNED by:

.....

Signature

**[insert authorised
signatory's
name]**

Caroline Withey.....

Title SHDF Programme Director

**for and on behalf of the
[insert name of Department]**

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.....

Date 05.05.2023

APPENDIX 1

GRANT DRAWDOWN REQUEST FORM

CLAIM FOR PAYMENT OF GRANT

This form must be used when you wish to claim an instalment of the Grant. When making a Grant Drawdown Request, as set out in the standard terms and conditions of in the Grant Funding Agreement and line with the Grant Payment Process outlined in Annex 11 to the Grant Funding Agreement.

This claim should be accompanied by an invoice which contains the relevant Purchase Order number and amount of grant being claimed in this Instalment Period.

We may request and You must supply proof of expenditure and any other supporting documentation and information in addition to the Grant Drawdown Request Form as We may require. As a minimum, proof of expenditure will be required three times per year as part of the Evidence Check within the Reconciliation Process.

Name of Applicant Organisation: London Borough of harrow

Instalment Period (Month) (Year)

	Amount (£)
Total grant	
Total grant paid to date	
Total grant requested in this Grant Drawdown Request	(to follow May)

DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS, ENERGY & INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

SCHEDULE 1
REASONABLE ASSURANCE REPORT

To: Directors and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (“BEIS”)

This report is produced in accordance with the terms of our letter of engagement dated [XX] for the purpose of reporting to [the directors of client] (the ‘company’) and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf) in connection with the monies receivable from BEIS under its Grant Funding Agreement dated X in respect of [project name] [for the period ended [date]] and in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated [date] (attached).

Our report is prepared solely for the confidential use of [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf). This report is released to [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS on the basis that it shall not be copied, referred to or disclosed, in whole or in part (save as otherwise permitted by agreed written terms), without our prior written consent except where there is a statutory requirement of disclosure. Without assuming or accepting any responsibility or liability in respect of this report to any party other than [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS, we acknowledge that [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS (or one of them) may be required to disclose this report to parties demonstrating a statutory right to see it, to enable such parties to exercise statutory rights of access to this report.

This report is designed to meet the agreed requirements of [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS and particular features of our engagement determined by their needs at the time. This report should not therefore be regarded as suitable to be used or relied on by any other party wishing to acquire any rights against [name of accountant] for any purpose or in any context. Any party other than [insert name of grant recipient] and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf) which obtains access to this report or a copy and chooses to rely on this report (or any part of it) will do so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, [name of accountant] will accept no responsibility or liability in respect of this report to any other party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by any person’s reliance on representations in this report.

As directors of the company, you are responsible for ensuring that accounting records are maintained which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the company/organisation, and in respect of Grant Drawdown Requests, as the company’s directors (the ‘directors’) you are responsible for compiling claims in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement, ensuring that only eligible items are included in each Grant Drawdown Request and for ensuring that all terms of such offer letters have been complied with or varied in writing with the provider. It is also the directors’ responsibility to extract relevant financial information from the company’s accounting records, to make the calculations specified in the grant offer letter, and to provide relevant financial information to BEIS.

Our approach

We conducted our engagement in accordance with ISAE 3000 (*Assurance engagements other than audits and reviews of historical financial information*). We

performed a reasonable assurance engagement as defined in the framework. For the purpose of the engagement, we have been provided by the directors with a schedule (attached to this report) (“the schedule”) showing the company’s eligible expenditure and the Grant Funding Agreement. The directors of the company remain solely responsible for the schedule.

The objective of a reasonable assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations which we consider necessary in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a positive conclusion on the schedule.

[Inherent limitations]

[The following two paragraphs only to be used only where the accountants are the auditors of the grant recipient]

[Our audit work on the financial statements of [grant recipient] is carried out in accordance with our statutory obligations and is subject to separate terms and conditions. This engagement will not be treated as having any effect on our separate duties and responsibilities as [grant recipient]’s external auditors. Our audit report on the financial statements is made solely to [grant recipient]’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to [grant recipient]’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than [grant recipient] and [grant recipient]’s members as a body, for our audit work, for our audit reports, or for the opinions we have formed.]

To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not and will not, by virtue of our reports/confirmations or otherwise, assume or accept any duty of care or liability under this engagement to [grant recipient] or to [BEIS] or to any other party, whether in contract, negligence or otherwise in relation to our audits of [grant recipient]’s financial statements.]

Conclusion

In our opinion, [the schedule] has been prepared, in all material respects, and the expenditure has been incurred, in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.

or

Except for [detail minor exceptions noted], in our opinion [the schedule] has been prepared, in all material aspects, and the expenditure has been incurred, in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.

or

In our opinion [the schedule] has not been prepared, in all material respects, and the expenditure has been incurred, in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.

[insert details of issues leading to qualification of opinion]

Firm of Accountants:

Office:

Date:

SCHEDULE 2
REPORTING ACCOUNTANTS: LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

Letter of engagement

The following are the pre-agreed terms of engagement on which the grant recipient engages accountants to perform a reasonable assurance report in connection with Wave 2.1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (“BEIS”) accepts that an agreement between the grant recipient, its reporting accountants and BEIS on these terms is formed when the accountants sign and submit to BEIS a report as set out in clause 3 below.

NB: BEIS will not need to sign anything. By publishing this document BEIS confirms that these pre-agreed terms form its agreement with the grant recipient and the reporting accountants. Once the accountants’ report is submitted to BEIS in accordance with these terms BEIS will accept that an agreement is formed. If the terms of the standardised engagement letter are to be revised, BEIS will need to confirm its acceptance of the new terms before an agreement is formed.

In these terms of engagement:

1. Introduction

The grant recipient is required to submit to BEIS reports as set out in clause 3 below that are also signed by an accountant to provide independent assurance. These terms of engagement set out the basis on which the accountant will sign the report.

2. The grant recipient’s responsibilities

- 2.1 The grant recipient is responsible for producing information, maintaining proper records complying with the terms of any legislation or regulatory requirements and BEIS’s terms and conditions of grant (‘the grant conditions’) and providing relevant information to BEIS in accordance with the requirements of the grant conditions. The grant recipient is responsible for ensuring that the non-financial records can be reconciled to the financial records.
- 2.2 The management of the grant recipient will make available to the accountant all records, correspondence, information, and explanations that the accountant considers necessary to enable the accountant to perform the accountant’s work.
- 2.3 The grant recipient and BEIS accept that the ability of the accountant to perform its work effectively depends upon the grant recipient providing full and free access to the financial and other records and the grant recipient shall procure that any such records held by a third party are made available to the accountant.

- 2.4 The accountant accepts that, whether or not the grant recipient meets its obligations, the accountant remains under an obligation to BEIS to perform its work with reasonable care. The failure by the grant recipient to meet its obligations may cause the accountant to qualify its report or be unable to provide a report.

3. Scope of the accountant's work

- 3.1 The grant recipient will provide the accountant with such information, explanations, and documentation that the accountant considers necessary to carry out its responsibilities. The accountant will seek written representations from management in relation to matters for which independent corroboration is not available. The accountant will also seek confirmation that any significant matters of which the accountant should be aware have been brought to the accountant's attention.
- 3.2 The accountant will perform carry out a reasonable level of assurance assignment and subject to any adverse findings will produce a report in the form set out in Schedule 1.
- 3.3 The accountant will not subject the information provided by the grant recipient to checking or verification except to the extent expressly stated. While the accountant will perform the accountant's work with reasonable skill and care, the accountant's work should not be relied upon to disclose all misstatements, fraud or errors that might exist.

4. Form of the accountant's report

- 4.1 The accountant's reports are prepared on the following bases:
- 4.1.1 the accountant's reports are prepared solely for the confidential use of the grant recipient and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf) and solely for the purpose of submission to BEIS in connection with BEIS's requirements in connection with the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1 . They may not be relied upon by the grant recipient or BEIS for any other purpose;
 - 4.1.2 without imposing on the accountant and without the accountant assuming (or being perceived as assuming) any duty or responsibility and without imposing or accepting any liability to anyone except the grant recipient and BEIS, BEIS may disclose the reports to the European Commission for state aid purposes, Parliament, the Comptroller and Auditor General (NAO) and others who demonstrate statutory rights of access to the report;
 - 4.1.3 neither the grant recipient, BEIS or any parties appointed to act on its behalf may rely on any oral or draft reports the accountant provides. The accountant accepts responsibility to the grant recipient and BEIS for the accountant's final signed reports only;
 - 4.1.4 the report will be prepared solely for the confidential use of the grant recipient and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf). The report will be released to the grant recipient and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf) on the basis that it shall not be copied, referred to or disclosed, in whole or in part (save as

otherwise permitted by agreed written terms), without the accountant's prior written consent, except where there is a legal or statutory right of access. Without assuming or accepting any responsibility or liability in respect of the report to any party other than the grant recipient and BEIS, we acknowledge that the grant recipient and BEIS (or one of them) may be required to disclose this report to parties demonstrating a statutory right to see it, to enable such parties to exercise their statutory rights of access to this report;

- 4.1.5 to the fullest extent permitted by law, except for the grant recipient and BEIS (and any parties appointed to act on its behalf), the firm of accountants, its partners and staff neither owe nor accept any duty to any person (including, without limitation, any person who may use or refer to any of BEIS's publications) and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by any person's reliance on representations in the accountant's reports.

5. Liability provisions

- 5.1 The accountant will perform the engagement with reasonable skill and care and accepts responsibility to the grant recipient and to BEIS for losses, damages, costs or expenses ('losses') caused by its breach of contract, negligence or wilful default, subject to the following provisions:
- 5.1.1 The accountant will not be responsible or liable if such losses are due to the provision of false, misleading or incomplete information or documentation or due to the acts or omissions of any person other than the accountant, except where, on the basis of the enquiries normally undertaken by accountants within the scope set out in these terms of engagement, it would have been reasonable for the accountant to discover such defects.
- 5.1.2 The accountant accepts liability without limit for the consequences of its own fraud and for any other liability which it is not permitted by law to limit or exclude.
- 5.1.3 Subject to the previous paragraph (5.1.2), the total aggregate liability of the accountant whether in contract, tort (including negligence) or otherwise, to each of the grant recipient and BEIS, arising from or in connection with the work which is the subject of these terms (including any addition or variation to the work), shall not exceed the maximum value of the Grant (as set out in the Grant Funding Agreement).
- 5.2 The grant recipient and BEIS agree that they will not bring any claims or proceedings against any individual partners, members, directors or employees of the accountant. This clause is intended to benefit such partners, members, directors and employees who may enforce this clause pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 ('the Act'). Notwithstanding any benefits or rights conferred by this agreement on any third party by virtue of the Act, the parties to this agreement may agree to vary or rescind this agreement without any third party's consent. Other than as expressly provided in these terms, the Act is excluded.

- 5.3 Any claims, whether in contract, negligence or otherwise, must be formally commenced within 4 years after the party bringing the claim becomes aware (or ought reasonably to have become aware) of the facts which give rise to the action and in any event no later than 6 years after relevant report was issued (or, if no report was issued, when the accountant accepted the engagement in writing). This expressly overrides any statutory provision which would otherwise apply.
- 5.4 This engagement is separate from and unrelated to any audit work of the accountant on the financial statements of the grant recipient for the purposes of any applicable statutory or regulatory or other auditing framework and nothing herein creates obligations or liabilities regarding the accountant's audit work, which would not otherwise exist.

6. Fees

The accountant's fees, together with VAT and out-of-pocket expenses, will be agreed with and billed to the grant recipient. BEIS is not liable to pay the accountant's fees.

7. Quality of service

The accountant will investigate all complaints. BEIS or the grant recipient have the right to take any complaint to the ICAEW. BEIS or the grant recipient may obtain an explanation of the mechanisms that operate in respect of a complaint to the ICAEW at www.icaew.co.uk/complaints or by writing to the ICAEW at the ICAEW Professional Standards Office, Metropolitan House, 321 Avebury Boulevard, Milton Keynes MK9 2FZ UK.

8. Providing services to other parties

The accountant will not be prevented or restricted by virtue of the accountant's relationship with the grant recipient and BEIS, including anything in these terms of engagement, from providing services to other clients. The accountant's standard internal procedures are designed to ensure that confidential information communicated to the accountant during the course of an assignment will be maintained confidentially.

9. Applicable law and jurisdiction

- 9.1 This agreement shall be governed by and interpreted and construed in accordance with the law of England.
- 9.2 The grant recipient, BEIS and the accountant irrevocably agree that the courts of England shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute (including claims for set-off and counterclaims) which may arise on any basis in connection with the validity, effect, interpretation or performance of, or the legal relationship established by this agreement or otherwise arising in connection with this agreement.

10. Alteration to terms

All additions, amendments, and variations to these terms of engagement shall be binding only if in writing and signed by the duly authorised representatives of the parties. These terms supersede any previous

agreements and representations (unless based on fraud) between the parties in respect of the scope of the accountant's work and the accountant's report or the obligations of any of the parties relating thereto (whether oral or written) and represents the entire agreement and understanding between the parties. These terms do not affect any separate agreement in writing between the grant recipient and the accountant.



You will need to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) if:

- You are developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- You are making changes that will affect front-line services
- You are reducing budgets, which may affect front-line services
- You are changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
- You are making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
- You are making staff redundant or changing their roles

Guidance notes on how to complete an EqIA and sign off process are available on the Hub under Equality and Diversity. You must read the [guidance notes](#) and ensure you have followed all stages of the EqIA approval process (outlined in appendix 1). Section 2 of the template requires you to undertake an assessment of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. Equalities and borough profile data, as well as other sources of statistical information can be found on the Harrow hub, within the section entitled: [Equality Impact Assessment](#) - sources of statistical information.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)		
Type of Decision:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cabinet <input type="radio"/> Portfolio holder <input type="radio"/> Other (state)	
Title of Proposal	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) programme	Date EqIA created 28/04/23
Name and job title of completing/lead Officer	Andres Shoman Project Lead: Strategy & Programme	
Directorate/ Service responsible		
Organisational approval		
EqIA approved by	Name: Jennifer Rock Assistant Policy Officer EDI Team	Signature <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA Date of approval: 11.05.2023

1. Summary of proposal, impact on groups with protected characteristics and mitigating actions

(to be completed **after** you have completed sections 2 - 5)

a) What is your proposal?

To provide a full assessment for the landmark central government grant funded scheme for housing decarbonisation. The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.1 is a 2-year programme with a strict reporting, contractual and milestone delivery framework set by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

Following the London Borough of Harrow's successful grant bid for 100% of applied funding, Harrow has been awarded with the highest grant relative to stock size in London – at £2.147m contributing to a contract circa £5.1m of which £2.93m will be co-funding by Harrow to deliver energy efficiency works across over 226 homes, impacting a diverse resident profile.

Project Name	Project Description
SHDF wave 2.1	<p>As part of the council's SHDF wave 2.1 application, the Council set out an ambitious retrofit plan. This includes the planned upgrade of 100% of its poorly performing British Iron and Steel Federation (BISF) archetype non-traditional housing stock of the approved decarbonisation roadmap. This will see the remainder of 97 BISF properties whole-house retrofitted with fabric first measures and Solar PV, to achieve (Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C and above over the next 2 financial years of delivery. The programme includes Capital funding for windows, roofs, doors and ventilation to be delivered in parallel with Bid measures.</p> <p>We are actively dealing with Fuel Poverty through the SHDF programme which will reduce bills as a result of energy efficiency measure implementation. This follows a recent influx fuel poverty referrals, involving consultation with vulnerable resident groups.</p>

b) Summarise the impact of your proposal on groups with protected characteristics

Energy Efficiency Measures

1. We do not anticipate that the SHDF programme will have a negative impact on Harrow residents or result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares protected characteristics.
2. Outcomes through proposed whole-house retrofit will include the following:
 - Damp & Mould: Through fabric first intervention, improved insulation and smart ventilation across homes, minimising Health & Safety risk.
 - Comfort and wellbeing: Warmer and better insulated homes which provide enhanced living environments with enhanced ambient temperature management across winter and summer extremes.
 - Fuel Poverty – tangible bill reduction following programme of energy efficiency measures.
 - Carbon reduction – whole house retrofit
 - Renewable energy integration – solar PV installation across multiple homes
 - Environmental control – through sensors which can remotely monitor humidity, temperature and carbon dioxide emissions, informing of multiple indicators for decarbonisation
3. Where appropriate, the energy efficiency home improvements will support the access needs of vulnerable residents who are suffering as a result of fuel poverty, by installing measures which will reduce fuel bills, creating warmer, safer and more comfortable living environments. Safety will be impacted by way of the installation of environmental sensors.

b) Summarise any potential negative impact(s) identified and mitigating actions

We do not anticipate that these projects will have a negative impact on Harrow residents or result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares protected characteristics.

2. Assessing impact																			
Protected characteristic		What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics? Click the relevant box to indicate whether your proposal will have a positive impact, negative (minor, major), or no impact																	
For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.		Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact														
			Minor	Major															
Age	<p>Harrow has a resident population of 261,300¹. Increasing by 9.3% in the ten years between 2011 and 2021 with an increase of 7.8% in people aged 15 to 64 years, It has an above average working age population aged 16-64 of just under 64% (160,462) and a growing younger population aged 0-15 of 18.5% (48,300), which is higher than the London average, suggesting that the borough is a popular destination for families².</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <caption>Population by Age band % (Harrow 2021 Census)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Band</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-15</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16-24</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-49</td> <td>37%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-64</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65-84</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>85+</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Age Band	Percentage	0-15	20%	16-24	10%	25-49	37%	50-64	17%	65-84	13%	85+	2%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Age Band	Percentage																		
0-15	20%																		
16-24	10%																		
25-49	37%																		
50-64	17%																		
65-84	13%																		
85+	2%																		

¹ Census 2021

² Census 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with most areas in the country, the borough has an ageing population. With the number of residents aged 65 plus increasing by 19.4% in the ten years between 2011 and 2021 with 31% rise in people aged 90 years and over³. Those aged 85 plus could increase by 60% by 2030⁴. Data available shows that the pandemic has adversely impacted young people aged 18-24, with 1 in 10 young people out of work⁵. Harrow has one of the lowest proportions of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETS). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in numbers, from 0.8% to 1.8%⁶. (Now 1.2% August 2022⁷) <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their age. 				
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 Census data shows that 9.75% of Harrow's population aged 15 to 64 years have a disability this equates to 16,840 people. There is a strong correlation between disability, in particular the extent of the disability, and economic inactivity. There are also particular groups that have specific obstacles in progressing to the labour market or sustaining self-employment. These include adults with learning disabilities and those with severe mental health issues. Disabled people are also likely to be under-represented among business owners within Harrow. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their disability status. Where appropriate, the SFDF programme improvements will support the access needs of disabled people such as wheelchair users and those with 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

³ Census 2021

⁴ Poppi and Pansi projections to 2030

⁵ DWP Job claimant data April 2021

⁶ NEETS data at December 2020.

⁷ NEETS data at December 2022.

	visual impairment e.g., review for level access showers where bathroom works are identified at the same time as energy efficiency measures.				
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) survey found that one in six respondents identified themselves as prejudiced towards transgender people⁸. There is limited national data collected for this characteristic. We will need to consider the inequalities and discrimination experienced for this protected group when data becomes available. The charity Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIREs) estimated in their Home Office funded study in 2009 the number of transgender people in the UK to be between 300,000 and 500,000. More recently Stonewall advised that it is estimated that around 1% of the population might identify as trans, including people who identify as non-binary. This would represent about 600,000 trans and non-binary people in Britain and about 2,500 people in Harrow. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their gender reassignment status. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 Census 53.9% of Harrow's residents were married or in a registered civil partnership, which was the highest level in London. 21% of households were married, or in same-sex civil partnerships, with dependent children, the highest level in London. At October 2020 there have been 144 Same Gender Civil Partnerships in Harrow, 25 of which has been converted to a Marriage. There have been 8 Opposite Gender Civil Partnerships. There have been 57 Same Sex marriages. <p>Impact</p> <p>The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their marriage and partnership status.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

⁸ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2020), Attitudes transgender people, 2020

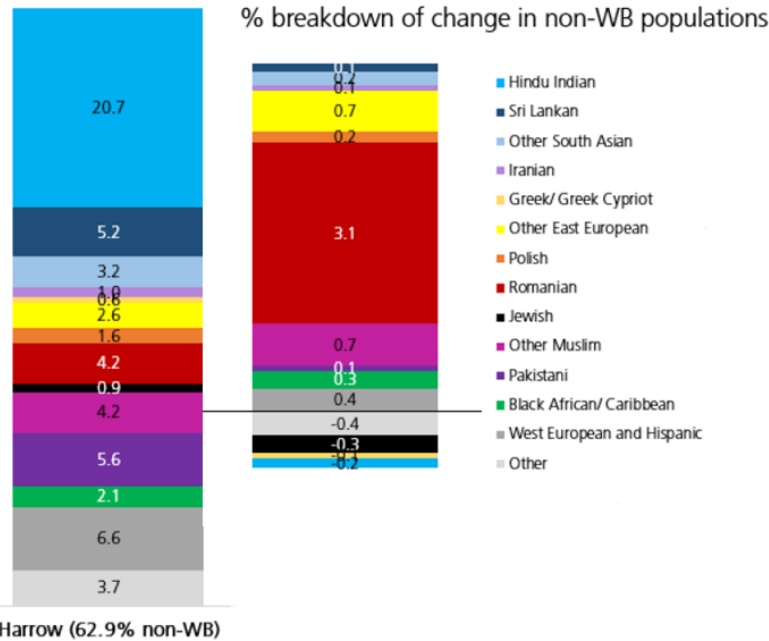
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONS births figures show Harrow as having 3,312 live births in 2021⁹. 14 live births per 1000 population is higher than the England & Wales average of 10.8 • The borough has a higher-than-average infant mortality rate in London, at a rate of 3.9 deaths per 1000 live births, which is an indicator of poverty and inequality in the borough.¹⁰ • Nationally, women have faced discrimination during pregnancy and maternity in the workplace. EHRC Survey data shows that around one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they were either dismissed; made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not. <p>Impact The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their pregnancy and maternity status, including residents with childcare/caring responsibilities.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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⁹ Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2022), Live births in England and Wales 2021

¹⁰ Public Health England (2022), London's Poverty Profile 2022,

Race/
Ethnicity

% breakdown of non-WB populations, 2019



- Harrow is one of the most culturally diverse local authorities in the UK, with over 60% of residents from Black, Asian, and Multi-Ethnic backgrounds and an estimated 20% Eastern European community, which is fast growing¹¹. Black African (notably the Somali Community) groups have been fast growing over the last 6 years or so, as has the Afghan community.
- Unemployment rates are significantly higher in certain areas of the borough, particularly in the Wealdstone and Marlborough wards (central Harrow) and Roxbourne (south Harrow), focused in an around the Rayners Lane estate and among residents classified as Black and Other ethnic groups. These areas are also ranked high on the indices of deprivation for the UK.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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¹¹ Harrow Economic assessment 2019-2020: population

Religion or belief

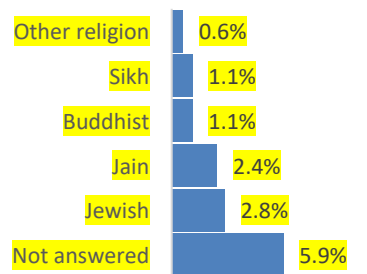
- The majority of 16–18-year-olds that are classed as NEET are from Black and Multi Ethnic backgrounds and located in wards with high levels of deprivation. However, the data also shows that the single largest ethnic group of pupils aged 16-18 classed as NEET is White British.
- At ward level Marlborough, and Wealdstone have the highest number of households in need of re-housing. These respectively have a Black and Multi Ethnic population of 77% and 75%.
- The highest rates of overcrowding is in Greenhill ward (97.5 per 1,000 households) and a Black and Multi Ethnic population of 74% (2011 census).
- Over 94% of Harrow businesses are classed as micro-businesses. There is limited data on the profile of business ownership by protected characteristics. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most retail businesses in Harrow’s town centres are Black and Multi Ethnic owned.

Impact

The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their race and ethnicity.

- Religious diversity is strong in Harrow. At the 2011 Census Harrow was the most religiously diverse borough in the country with the highest number of Hindus (25%) and Jains (2.2%) and the second highest number of Zoroastrians.
- At the 2021 census Harrow had the highest number (and proportion) of Hindu followers in the country (25.8%). At 2.8% Harrow 's Jewish community was the ninth largest nationally. 33.9% of residents described themselves as Christians (the 11th lowest proportion in the country) and 15.9% described themselves as Muslims. Harrow had the lowest ranking for ‘no religion’ (10.9%).
- As the population’s ethnic composition changes, rates of participation in various religions are also likely to change¹².
- There is limited data on employment/unemployment rates for Harrow by religion.
- Data for London suggests that educational attainment and employment among the capital’s Muslim community is lower than those from other faith groups located in the borough¹³.

Harrow, Religion 2021 census



	<p>Impact The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their religion or beliefs.</p>				
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2021 census show that the total population of Harrow is now 261,300, made up of 132,500 women (50.7%) and 128,800 men (49.3%). Overall, the number of males and females living in Harrow is very similar. Economic activity among Harrow's male population is higher than the London average at 86%, compared with 83%¹⁴. However, economic activity among females in the borough is lower than the London average at 72%. Harrow is a low wage borough, with those that are employed in the borough earning less than the London average weekly earnings of £813.40¹⁵. Women also earn less than men in the borough. The average gross weekly earnings among women working in Harrow is £480.10, this is 28% lower than the London average of £666¹⁶. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

¹² Harrow Economic Assessment: 2019-2020: population

¹³ Annual Population Survey 2018.

¹⁴ NOMIS: Labour supply (at December 2020)

¹⁵ Source: NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2021

¹⁶ Source: NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% of Harrow businesses are female led.¹⁷ • While the pandemic may have negatively impacted both sexes, the shift to home working may have had a positive impact in enabling women to return to work, as they are able to share childcare responsibilities. <p>Impact The SHDF programme will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their sex.</p>				
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office for National Statistics estimated in 2014, 2.6% of Londoners identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, the highest of any UK region¹⁸. There is no official data on sexual orientation for Harrow in relation to employment. • LGBTQIA+ people are also likely to be underrepresented among business owners within Harrow. <p>Impact The projects will aim to be inclusive of all residents regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>2.1 Cumulative impact – considering what else is happening within the Council and Harrow as a whole, could your proposals have a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>					
<p>If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below</p>					
<p>2.2 Any other impact - considering what else is happening nationally/locally (national/local/regional policies, socio-economic factors etc), could your proposals have an impact on individuals/service users, or other groups?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>					

¹⁷ Beauhurst: number of companies registered at Companies House that are female led (April 2021)

¹⁸ Trust for London: London's Poverty profile 2016.

If you clicked the Yes box, Include details in the space below

Supplementary note: As the SHDF programme will tackle fuel poverty through the installation of fabric first measures, a proportion of vulnerable residents will be consulted as part of the PAS2035 survey process. These groups will be provided with tariff management advice to ensure they are able to maximise the benefits of completed works.

3. Actions to mitigate/remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your assessment (in section 2) suggests that your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. If you have not identified any negative impacts, please complete sections 4 and 5.

In the table below, please state what these potential negative impact (s) are, mitigating actions and steps taken to ensure that these measures will address and remove any negative impacts identified and by when. Please also state how you will monitor the impact of your proposal once implemented.

State what the negative impact(s) are for each group, identified in section 2. In addition, you should also consider, and state potential risks associated with your proposal.	Measures to mitigate negative impact (provide details, including details of and additional consultation undertaken/to be carried out in the future). If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.	What action (s) will you take to assess whether these measures have addressed and removed any negative impacts identified in your analysis? Please provide details. If you have previously stated that you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state below.	Deadline date	Lead Officer

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4. Public Sector Equality Duty

How does your proposal meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
3. Foster good relations between people from different groups

Include details in the space below

1. The SHDF programme will not result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares the protected characteristics.

5. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) click the box that applies

Outcome 1

No change required: the EqIA has not identified any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Outcome 2

Adjustments to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment, or to better advance equality, as stated in section 3&4

Outcome 3

This EqIA has identified discrimination and/ or missed opportunities to advance equality and/or foster good relations. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below.

Include details here

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Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	25 May 2023
Subject:	Household Support Fund (fourth iteration – April 2023 to March 2024)
Key Decision:	Yes - level of expenditure and affects every ward of the Borough
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap - Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Stephen Greek - Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications and Customer Experience
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Household Support Fund 4 Policy Document Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment Appendix 3: Household Support Fund 4 Delivery Plan

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The fourth iteration of the Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) is made available to Local Authorities in England, covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive.

The purpose of the Household Support Fund is to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs. Harrow Council has been allocated a grant of £2,953,414, which must be spent by 31 March 2024.

This report sets out how Harrow Council intends to spend the Household Support Fund by 31 March 2024.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Approve the allocation of the fourth extension of the Household Support Fund as set out in this report;
2. Approve the purchase of select codes vouchers from Blackhawk Network to a value of £578,000 for the low-income proactive awards and £62,000 for the application-based scheme (total £640,000);
3. Approve the transfer of approx. £1,612,000 to schools for them to provide free school meals (FSM) vouchers for approximately 6,500-7,000 households with children during the school holidays.
4. Approve the transfer of approx. £440,000 to Help Harrow to provide food aid across the borough.
5. Approve the policy for the application-based scheme and the proposed administering process by Citizens Advice Harrow;
6. Approve that the Council's Hardship Fund be redirected to the Household Support Fund application-based scheme for 2023/24 and;
7. Delegate to the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications and Customer Experience to make technical scheme amendments to ensure the scheme meets the criteria set by the Government and the Council and remains within the indicative grant level, including decisions on individual expenditure areas that exceed the £500,000 threshold, if required.
8. Delegate to the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications and Customer Experience to best determine the expenditure of any underspend, to be repurposed in the following areas:
 - a. to top up the application-based scheme; or
 - b. to provide winter warmth packs or other resources to Warm Hubs in Harrow; or

- c. to rent arrears, or:
- d. to any area of eligible spend where extra resources are needed at that time.

Reason (for recommendations):

The recommendations in this report meet the essential criteria for the grant as set out by the Department of Work and Pensions. The Council has considered where best to target the funding and the proposals provide a balance of support, mindful that the funding is not spread too thinly.

The proposal for the eligible spend covers the following:

- Free school meals (FSM) vouchers, which have previously been found to provide effective support to vulnerable households with children.
- Vouchers for households in receipt of housing benefit who miss out on the Government cost of living payment, and care leavers moving to independent accommodation.
- HelpHarrow and the Community Hub – this partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector has shown to be effective in providing essential food assistance and other support quickly and effectively to any vulnerable household in the borough.
- Advice services – through the Conversation Café model, targeting support for unpaid carers.
- An application-based scheme to be run within the Voluntary and Community Sector, which targets households who are not eligible for Government support but have presented with financial hardship and in need of emergency financial support.

Section 2 – Report

Harrow Council is committed to its vision of restoring pride in Harrow. The three Council priorities are:

- A council that puts residents first
- A borough that is clean and safe
- A place where those in need are supported

As included in the Corporate Plan, agreed by Council in February 2023, delivery of the Household Support Fund (fourth iteration) in Harrow helps the Council meet its corporate priority of 'A place where those in need are supported' and the flagship action "to help with the cost-of-living crisis, we will deliver another year of free school meals during school holidays (subject to Household Support Fund 4 Guidance)".

The fourth iteration of the Government's Household Support Fund is currently live:

- Household Support Fund – 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022

- Household Support Fund (extension, second iteration) – 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022
- Household Support Fund (extension, third iteration) – 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023
- Household Support Fund (extension, fourth iteration) – 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

For the first time, this iteration of the Fund will run for a 12-month period.

The guidance for the fourth iteration of the Household Support Fund (HSF4) and allocations for local authorities was announced on 20 February.

This provided that the Household Support Fund should be used to support households in the most need; particularly those who may not be eligible for the other support government has recently made available but who are nevertheless in need and who require crisis support. This includes the Cost-of-Living Payments and the energy support being provided for 2023/24¹.

For the Cost-of-Living payments this may include, but is not limited to:

- people who are entitled to but not claiming qualifying benefits
- people who are claiming Housing Benefit (HB) only and;
- people who begin a claim or return to payment of a benefit after the relevant qualifying date.

The guidance states that there may be groups who are vulnerable to rising prices even though they are supported through these schemes, for example large families or single-income families. Household Support Fund (HSF) is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need including:

- families with children of all ages
- pensioners
- unpaid carers
- care leavers and
- disabled people

Previous iterations of the HSF in Harrow have targeted each of the above cohorts, with the exception of unpaid carers, and therefore for HSF4 the proposal is to address help to unpaid carers especially through the funding allocation for the Conversation Café model.

Types of support funded through HSF can include energy and water; food; essentials linked to energy/water; wider essentials; advice services and limited housing costs where the focus is on mitigating rising living costs on household bills.

Councils are able to deliver HSF4 through various ways including vouchers, cash, food/goods provision, grants to third parties. The Council's HSF provision

¹ Detailed eligibility requirements can be found at:
[Cost of Living Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) and [Energy Price Guarantee - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

must include an application scheme so that residents have the opportunity to come forward for support. This needs to run throughout the HSF4 period, for the majority of it or at intervals throughout the year.

There must be a clear rationale/framework outlining the council's approach including how the council is defining eligibility and how households can access HSF4, a strong rationale for targeting cohorts using a wide range of data and sources. Local priorities may change over the year so councils can revisit their delivery plan with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Councils are able to claim reasonable admin costs associated to managing the Fund and these can include staff, advertising, web, print, small IT changes. The delegations that are in the recommendations of this report will give flexibility if these local priorities change over the course of the year.

The delivery plan for HSF4, as attached, is due to DWP by 17 May 2023 and must be signed off by the Section 151 officer and relevant Portfolio Holder, which in this case is Councillor Stephen Greek, Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications and Customer Experience.

Options considered

The recommendations seek to maximise the impact of this funding for households most in need in the Borough.

Expenditure of the Household Support Fund has been modelled applying different allocations to the categories where funding can be allocated. The recommended option strikes a balance between reaching as many low-income households in the Borough as possible whilst also targeting funding to cohorts identified as most in need of support. Learning from delivery of the previous three iterations of the Household Support Fund, as well as from other councils around London, has informed the recommended options. For example, focusing funding to vulnerable families and residents through Free School Meals in holiday time has proven to reach widely across Harrow communities; the use of vouchers has allowed the council to target support to specific cohorts; and the recent review of council support for food aid across the borough has demonstrated that there is a growing need to address food insecurity while the cost of living continues to rise.

Set out below is the recommended split of funding across different streams. The value of spending for each may alter depending on caseloads at the point data is extracted through the period the scheme is running.

The intention is to ensure all funding is spent by 31 March 2024 with the allocations as illustrated below. As the funding horizon is for 12 months in this iteration of the Household Support Fund (previous iterations were each for 6-month periods), this provides the opportunity to strategically plan resource allocation. However, it is recognised that the picture of need may change across the borough over 12 months and therefore the delivery of funding needs to be flexible and have scope to change. DWP will accommodate changes to the delivery plan throughout the year to reflect this and the delegations in the recommendations support this as well.

Total Grant: £2,953,414					
1. Free School Meals	2. Low income households – proactive voucher awards	3. Application based scheme – households who missed out on Government support	4. Help Harrow – universal food offer	5. Advice services	6. Admin
£1,612,267	£578,000	£62,000	£440,000	£25,000	£236,000
Vouchers issued to approx. 6,500-7,000 children for each school holiday up to Easter 2024	Vouchers issued to approx. 1,450-1,590 households, over two rounds (each round £100 for care leavers, £200 for Housing Benefit cohort)	£200 awards to approx. 310 households, throughout the year	Approx. 45,000 food parcels to 9,000 households, throughout the year	Build on the Conversation Café approach to target unpaid carers – numbers depend on no. of and location of events, 25-30% of visitors are unpaid carers	Council voucher admin costs, programme management and publicity and promotion of HSF

More details on each of these elements is set out below.

Free School Meals (FSM) Vouchers

We intend to continue to use this Government grant to provide free school meals (FSM) vouchers to eligible households with children during the school holidays from May 2023 through to Easter 2024 (inclusive). In line with the previous iteration of HSF, the value of the vouchers will be £3.50/day and will include a top up of £10 for the Christmas period.

Free school meals (FSM) vouchers have proved to be incredibly effective in identifying those families in most need, helping to ensure that children continue to have access to a meal during the holidays. By providing families with vouchers we help to reduce the need to have to choose between heating and eating and free up other household income to allocate towards fuel bills. There is currently no other viable alternative to identify as many households as possible in need of support. Schools already have voucher systems set up for those parents with children on free school meals, making the Council's schools funding a very efficient and effective way of giving financial support to families whose children qualify for free school meals.

There will be no overlap with the Mayor of London's free school meals funding provision for the 2023/24 academic year, as this initiative funds universal FSM for all primary aged children during term time only.

Low-income Households

In accordance with the DWP guidance to target an array of vulnerable groups and to exercise local discretion, using data and advice from council services as

well as experience from previous iterations of the HSF, the following groups have been identified as being most in need in Harrow because they have missed out on Government cost of living payments or are deemed to be particularly vulnerable. They are also groups we can proactively identify as a council and have contact information for so we can proactively target these groups with the issuing of a voucher or direct support:

- Approximately 1,300-1,440 households on housing benefit only as this group is not eligible for the means-tested Cost of Living Payments unless of pension age or eligible for a Disability Cost of Living Payment.
- Around 150 care leavers moving to independent accommodation who would not have been eligible for any government support due to the qualifying dates.

Blackhawk Voucher Scheme

The issuing of the voucher codes will be administered by the Blackhawk Network company, which has previously successfully been used by the council in HSF1 and HSF3.

The select codes were chosen in lieu of energy cards as they do not cover prepaid meters and therefore risk some households in need not being able to use the voucher.

The select codes aim to free up money that would otherwise have been used on food and other essential items like winter clothes, blankets and energy efficient cooking methods, for households to cover utility bills and other expenses. Select codes are also universally applicable in a variety of outlets including all major supermarkets and major retailers like Argos, the Range and Wilko, providing recipients with greater choice. They are straightforward and quick to administer and have an 1.28% discount rate. They are covered by the Crown Commercial Framework so there is no requirement for new terms and conditions as additional clauses can be added to the existing account to reflect the new requirements.

The voucher codes will have a value of £200 for the Housing Benefit cohort and will be valid for 3 months – they will be sent out by post by the council. We will follow this up with reminder letters after the first 4 weeks to maximise the redemption rate. Care leavers will receive their codes (for the value of £100) by email, as email addresses are held for them. This allows for several reminders to be sent to them. The target redemption rate for the Blackhawk voucher scheme is 80%, based on previous schemes as part of the same Government grant.

Blackhawk provide a free helpline for people needing help to redeem voucher codes, so the reliance on Access Harrow to field queries is alleviated.

Any underspend on unredeemed vouchers will be recycled into the application-based scheme, to funding for the Conversation Café or Warm Hubs in Winter 2023/24, or to rent arrears.

Application-Based Scheme

The DWP guidance stipulates that again this iteration of the Household Support Fund includes an application-based scheme so that residents have the opportunity to come forward for support. The proposed application scheme for Harrow will be aimed at households who are struggling with the rising cost of living but are not eligible for Government support (Cost of Living payments). Due to the budget available, the amount awarded will be lower than the Government payments. The criteria have been set in accordance with the government guidance referenced above, the ability to be able to identify and validate eligibility in the most cost-efficient way and to enable a meaningful amount to be awarded.

The eligibility criteria for the application-based scheme is that the applicant:

- Is a Harrow resident
- Has not received a cost-of-living payment from the Government since 1 April 2023
- Must be liable for energy/fuel costs in which the property in which they live
- Need support with meeting their day to day living expenses including food and utility bills, as evidenced by 3-months of bank statements
- Has not received an award from the Household Support Fund application scheme in the last 6 months
- Is willing to comply with any reasonable conditions concerning the payment award, including for example, receiving support from advice agencies

The amount available will be used to issue up to 310 £200 awards through select codes (Blackhawk vouchers). The application-based scheme will be administered by Citizens Advice Harrow within the Voluntary and Community Sector as previous experience has proven that this is more successful in reach. The previous HSF was administered through the council, was resource intensive and had lower uptake than when it was moved to within the VCS. Citizens Advice Harrow is able to provide more holistic support in that it can provide/signpost to longer-term solutions around hardship and debt advice.

The scheme will accept applications over three rounds throughout the year until March 2024. The application scheme will close as soon as there is a risk of funds running out, pending the re-allocation of any unspent funding from other parts of the scheme. Expenditure and uptake of the application-based scheme will be regularly monitored by the Policy Team within the council. As the scheme progresses, there is scope to repurpose unspent funds to the application scheme.

To avoid duplication and confusion over schemes, residents wanting to access the council's Hardship Fund will be redirected to the Household Support Fund application scheme in 2023/24, while funds remain. Should the funds in the application-based scheme run out, the council will re-open the Hardship Fund in-year.

The Council will also develop a Communications and Engagement Plan, working with voluntary and community groups to raise awareness of the application-based scheme, ensure those who are eligible apply and ensuring that relevant teams and organisations have the necessary information to signpost residents to available support.

Key planned activities include:

- Communications and outreach planning and coordination through the Council's Communications Team.
- Sending reminder letters to those issued with vouchers and not yet redeemed.
- Continuously monitoring uptake and redemption rates to coordinate and target content outputs.
- Ensuring Access Harrow and front-line services (housing, children's front door, adult social care) are aware and have sufficient information about the application scheme and its criteria to signpost service users.
- Working with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations (Citizens Advice, Harrow Association of Disabled, Harrow Carers, the Information & Advice Network) to promote the application-based scheme.
- Combining Household Support Fund mailshots with other information and advice and signposting to other support available.
- Using the communications and publicity toolkit provided by DWP to promote the Household Support Fund, through the council's Cost of Living webpage.

Community Hub and HelpHarrow

It is proposed that Household Support Fund is used to fund the Community Hub for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This will enable the continuation of crucial food provision to households in need in the borough. Addressing food security continues to be one of the key priority areas within the DWP guidance on the Household Support Fund.

The Community Hub in Harrow was set up as a partnership between the council and Voluntary and Community Sector groups, initially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to co-ordinate, source and deliver emergency food supplies to vulnerable residents. The central management of the food supplies and deliveries was co-ordinated by London's Community Kitchen, operating out of the Bridge with residents able to request support directly or via a referral through the HelpHarrow online portal. After Covid services were stepped down, the Community Hub evolved and adapted its offer to be able to continue supporting any resident finding themselves in need as a result of financial hardship and the cost of living.

Under the Household Support Fund, introduced in October 2021, with its already established model in place around food support, the HSF was used to continue funding the Community Hub.

With confirmation that HSF funding would continue for at least another 12 months (this fourth iteration, to March 2024), the council reviewed the support it provides to the Community Hub in the context of plans for its future sustainability and ensuring best use of HSF in support of food security going forwards.

The review drew in national, regional and local sources of data on food insecurity and also regional discussions on addressing food insecurity to identify the best strategic approach to emergency food aid pan-London. The review used intelligence and insight from local food aid providers and users, through food bank and warm hub data and online surveys, as well as feedback through Harrow's Cost of Living Summit in January 2023 and the council-commissioned Residents' Survey (January to March 2023) findings on cost of living pressures on residents.

The evidence has shown that the need for food aid in the borough and addressing food insecurity remains. The demand for food support has grown over the past year and given the rising cost of food, is likely to continue.

The council has supported food aid in the borough through drawing down on the Household Support Fund, through providing free school meals during holiday periods (food vouchers), vouchers to low-income households to offset rising grocery costs, as well as providing funding and in-kind support to food banks and warm hubs.

The review found that the current mechanisms for council-funded food aid, predominantly through HelpHarrow and its partnership with London's Community Kitchen (LCK), is effective and established. It has supported almost 12,000 residents in the last three months. The reach is wide into different communities and geographical spread. It also demonstrates strong relationships across the VCS. In various hub and spoke models of food aid across the borough, it is HelpHarrow and LCK that are at the hub, coordinating and supporting efforts.

The operational reach of HelpHarrow and LCK goes well beyond emergency food distribution. It is also supporting wider agendas around food security and food education, for example the Plant to Plate work with Public Health, the development of an urban farm, and training schemes for people with learning disabilities which can result in work placements with the Hilton hospitality group. This will enable the council to make progress on its flagship actions around addressing the rising cost of living, as well as supporting skills and employment opportunities for the most vulnerable.

It is important that food aid continues to be universally accessible to all parts of Harrow communities. It is recognised that with food support by referral it is easier to collect data on users and that open access to food markets for example may need to demonstrate anonymity by nature. Any provision funded through the Household Support Fund requires quarterly monitoring information to be submitted, so that the council can ensure the support provided is being delivered to those who need it and for returns to DWP, as part of the grant conditions.

The 12-month funding horizon of HSF4 will allow a better level of certainty and allow for better planning. Following the review, HelpHarrow has been asked to use this period to build a sustainability plan on the assumption that council support will be limited going forward, and that HSF funding will not be available year-on-year.

During the previous iteration of the Household Support Fund (iteration 3, October 2022 to March 2023), HelpHarrow distributed 20,726 food parcels and supported 5,047 households in Harrow. Almost half of these households included children, 18% pensioners and 15% with disabled persons. These are in line with DWP category definitions and information required for quarterly monitoring returns to DWP. The top three reasons given for requesting food support are hardship; health concerns; and unemployment.

Additional to food support, the last iteration of the Household Support Fund provided £5,000 to fund around 300 winter warmth packs to be distributed through HelpHarrow and the network of around 40 Warm Hubs in the borough. This complemented the provision of winter warmth packs provided through Public Health monies.

Administrative Costs

The DWP permits local authorities to use a reasonable amount of the Household Support Fund to pay for administration of the scheme.

Given the amount of grant available for distribution and the timeframe of this iteration of the Household Support Fund, there will be greater demands on programme management/oversight. The DWP guidance also includes greater requirements of councils to provide publicity and communications around the support available. The council will use £236k of the grant on voucher admin costs (proactive support to low-income households), programme management and publicity and promotion of the Household Support Fund. Where possible, the council will use existing capacity within the organisation to support any administrative activity, so the allocation of the grant to administration costs can be minimised.

Ward Councillors' comments

Not applicable.

Performance Issues

Performance will be tracked through:

- Monthly monitoring reports provided by Blackhawk on voucher redemption rates;
- Free school meal voucher usage through schools;
- Help Harrow monitoring information, for example:
 - Number of requests for support
 - Number of deliveries
 - Household composition of households supported
 - Demographic information e.g. age, ethnicity, postcode area
 - Reason for requesting support; and
- Other information gathered for quarterly MI returns to the Department for Work and Pensions.

Environmental Implications

There are none.

Data Protection Implications

A data protection impact assessment for administering the Household Support Fund has previously been completed and our systems are already data compliant. Therefore, there are not considered to be any key data protection risks.

The previous iteration of HSF(3) asked Citizens Advice Harrow to administer the latter stages of the application based scheme. So, the supporting application forms and requirements have been checked for data protection implications and reference to each organisation's privacy policy made on the application form.

Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below.

The following key risks should be taken onto account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
Risk of unmanageable demand for the application-based scheme. Insufficient funds available to support resulting in overspend and reputational risk in case of having to close scheme early.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of allocations against demand predicted will be carried out to ensure there is no overspend or underspend. • The eligibility criteria is very tight and there will be regular review to monitor any potential overspend and comms activity to the public will be coordinated and expectations will be managed. • For any underspent funds to be repurposed to alternative grant elements. 	AMBER
Funding overspend or underspend particularly the Risk of underspend on the application scheme or any other elements of the Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of allocations against outcomes predicted will be carried out to ensure there is no overspend or underspend. 	AMBER

<p>– resulting from too few applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackhawk vouchers - relatively low element, expected redemption at least 80 %. Any unredeemed funds will be rebated and can be repurposed. • FSM vouchers – any left-over FSM funds will be retained to cover any FSM overspend due to an increase in the number of children receiving FSM over the course of the HSF scheme. • Other elements or strands of the scheme – funding is limited to the amount allocated so any increase in demand will not be met. 	
<p>Risk that sustaining the activity in the programme is dependent on continuing to receive the Government grant which creates a funding cliff edge if and when the Government grant comes to an end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will work with partners to review the support the grant is currently funding and continue to make representations to Government regarding future funding. 	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Risk of Fraud & Misconduct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will use proven methods of delivering focused funding to vulnerable families and residents such as Free School Meals so lowering the risk of fraud or misconduct in this area • Databases are held by the relevant teams such as the Revenues & Benefits team and recipients can be identified with necessary checks carried out. • Contact and liaison with the Council's Counter Fraud Team if 	<p>AMBER</p>

	fraud is suspected in any part of the scheme	
Risk of funding not being committed by the March 2024 deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most elements of the scheme are proactive issue of awards so do not need to be claimed by residents which reduces the risk of underspend. • Publicity will be undertaken to raise awareness, in particular with partners who are well placed to signpost low-income households to take up the vouchers. • Any unspent funds will be repurposed before March 2024 - to top up the application scheme, to provide resources to warm hubs, to be used towards rent arrears. 	GREEN
Full grant funding not received as a result of DWP determining that some spend was not eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment of the grant from DWP will be made in arrears on a quarterly basis after the interim MI returns in July 2023, October 2023 and January 2024, and the final MI return at the end of grant period in April 2024 after the DWP has verified the final MI. • The final grant payment will be dependent on DWP being satisfied of the LA's MI submission evidence eligible spend within the scheme. • Harrow council's approach takes full account of DWP guidance on spend to ensure its scheme is within the framework. • The delivery plan will be submitted to DWP in May 2023. As per DWP guidance, there is scope to change the expenditure in-year, so long as DWP are informed of any major changes. 	GREEN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any feedback from DWP in response to MI returns or changes to delivery plan will be considered and implemented as appropriate to ensure the scheme remains compliant. • There is flexibility within the scheme to adapt it and local discretion can be used to make changes to the allocation of funding across the different elements. 	
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Procurement Implications

There are no procurement implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

The engagement of Blackhawk for the purchase of vouchers has no contractual value associated to it. The supplier benefits from arrangements with retailers where the vouchers are spent. The Council also receives a discount of 1.28% on the face value of the vouchers. We have for previous HSF schemes used Blackhawk whom we engaged through a Crown Commercial Services framework. We will extend this relationship further to March 2024.

The funds being circulated to Help Harrow are not subject to procurement and will be passported to the organisation for the purpose of delivering the universal food offer.

Legal Implications

A total of £842m has been made available to Local Authorities to support those most in need with the significantly rising cost of living via the Household Support Fund (“the Fund”). The Secretary of State determines the Local Authorities to which grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid.

The DWP is providing funding under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Local Authorities are responsible for setting criteria and administering the fund. The funding period covers 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2024 inclusive. Harrow Council has been allocated a grant of £2,953,414, which must be spent by 31 March 2024.

The Department for Work and Pensions (“DWP”) has issued guidance on use of the funds including eligibility criteria. The expectation is that the fund should be used to support eligible households in the most need, particularly those who may not be eligible for other support (such as Cost of Living Payments and the energy support for 2023/2024) the government has recently made available but nevertheless in need and require crisis support.

There are requirements in relation to information sharing and submitting monitoring returns on use of the funds. The guidance contains provisions in relation to combatting fraud to ensure that monies can be recovered, and action taken if any applications are submitted on a fraudulent basis. There should be appropriate checks in place to verify the identity of those who are eligible.

Local Authorities have discretion on exactly how this funding is used within the scope set out in the grant conditions and guidance documentation provided by the DWP. The expectation is that it should primarily be used to support households in the most need particularly those including children, pensioners, disabled residents, and carers who would face acute challenges due and would otherwise struggle with energy bills, food, water bills, other essential household costs and housing costs in exceptional circumstances.

Financial Implications

Harrow Council has been allocated a grant of £2,953,414, which must be spent by 31 March 2024. This funding will cover the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive. £236,000 of the grant can be applied to administering the scheme. For Harrow, this will include scheme administration and support (programme oversight and communications), mailshot and admin for the Blackhawk voucher. Where it is possible, the council will use existing capacity within the organisation to support any administrative activity, so the allocation of the grant to administration costs can be minimised.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Decision makers should have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties and not duties to secure a particular outcome. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Cabinet has regard to the statutory grounds of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
 - Tackle prejudice, and
 - Promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

An equality impact assessment (EQIA) has been undertaken for this proposal the EQIA concludes that:

- There will be a positive impact on working households with children.
- There will be a positive impact on residents in receipt of housing benefit.
- There will be a positive impact on vulnerable households.
- There will be a positive impact on Harrow residents who can take advantage of the ongoing food resource via the Community Hub.

Mitigations are set out in the Equality Impact Assessment.

An updated announcement of the extension of the Household Support Fund will be published on Harrow's website, which meets the general accessibility criteria.

Council Priorities

The delivery of the Household Support Fund 4 in Harrow helps the council meet its corporate priority of 'A place where those in need are supported' and the flagship action "to help with the cost-of-living crisis, we will deliver another year

of free school meals during school holidays (subject to Household Support Fund 4 Guidance)".

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Sharon Daniels

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 03/05/23

Statutory Officer: Stephen Dorrian

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 15/05/23

Chief Officer: Alex Dewsnap

Signed off by the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation

Date: 28/04/23

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 04/05/23

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 09/05/23

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: YES

EqlA cleared by: Yasmeen Hussein, EDI Policy Officer, 28/04/23

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background

Papers

Contact: Nahreen Matlib, Senior Policy Officer,
nahreen.matlib@harrow.gov.uk [add contact number]

Background Papers: None

**Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Committee - NO**

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Household Support Fund 4 Policy

Introduction

In late February 2023, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced that a fourth iteration of the Household Support Fund (HSF), (“the grant”) would be made available to councils in England to support those most in need to help with the rising cost of living.

The report presented to Cabinet in May 2023 provides the background, options and information on the proposed framework. This policy sets out the key criteria for Harrow’s Household Support Fund 4 programme.

Harrow Council has been allocated a grant of £2,953,414 which must be spent by 31 March 2024. This funding will cover the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive.

Eligibility Criteria

The Grant is limited to awards covering the funding period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Funds must have been spent or committed before 31 March 2024 and cannot be used for future commitments and should include an application-based process.

Recipients must be households currently living within the Borough of Harrow.

Table 1 sets out general eligible criteria and definitions

Table 1: Housing Support Fund Criteria and Definitions

Condition / Principle	Guidance	Criteria
Households with Children		This means a household with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a person who will be under the age of 19 as at 31st March 2024, <u>or</u> 2) a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit is paid or free school meals are provided during the period 01 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.
Free School Meals	The fund should be used to help those who are struggling to afford food	Any child resident in Harrow that is registered as being eligible for Free School Meals
Government Cost of Living Payments	Local Authorities should particularly consider how they can support those vulnerable households who are ineligible for other government support with the cost of living	Government Cost of Living payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amended Energy Price Guarantee from April 2023 • up to £900 in Cost of Living Payments for those on eligible means tested benefits • £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment • one-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment (through the Winter Fuel Payment)
Essential Living Costs	The HSF should primarily be used to support households in most need with eligible spend for essential living costs	These costs should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Food

		<p>4) Energy for domestic heating, cooking or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders.</p> <p>5) Water bills for drinking, washing, cooking, and sanitary purposes and sewerage.</p> <p>6) Essentials linked to the above, in recognition that costs may arise which directly affect a household's ability to afford or access food, energy and water. e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Sanitary products ii. Warm clothing iii. Soap iv. Blankets v. Boiler service/repair, vi. Purchase of energy efficient equipment including fridges, freezers, microwaves, etc. vii. Insulation, draft excluders
Associated Living Costs	The HSF can also be used to support households with certain other essential costs	<p>7) Wider essential costs not linked to energy and water. These may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, ii. Other clothing iii. Other furniture such as mattress iv. Essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel. v. Council Tax arrears
Other	The HSF can be used for other means of support not covered by the above	<p>8) Housing costs, in exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing welfare and support i.e. the housing cost element of Universal Credit (UC), Housing Benefit (HB) or Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) do not meet this exceptional need, the HSF can be used to support housing costs but not mortgage payments.</p> <p>9) Support to individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), funding can be provided, regardless of immigration status, if there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. there are community care needs ii. they have serious health problems iii. there is a risk to a child's wellbeing <p>Furthermore, people with no recourse to public funds can access the scheme under s.138 of the Local Government Act as long as the Covid pandemic continues to be treated as an emergency/disaster.</p>

Non-eligible spend

Eligible spend does not include the following:

- Mortgage costs.

Free School Meals

Table 2 provides the proposed funding levels for Free School Meals

Table 2: Proposed Funding for Free School Meals

Category	Estimated No. of Children	Proposed Funding per Child	Provisional Allocation of Funding (£)
Families with Children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM):			
May Half-Term 2023 (5 days)	6,451	£3.50 per day per child	112,892.50
Summer Holidays 2023 (30 days)	6,650	£3.50 per day per child	698,250
October Half Term 2023 (5 days)	6,650	£3.50 per day per child	116,375
Christmas Holidays 2023 (11 days)	6,850	£3.50 per day per child plus additional £10 for Christmas	332,225
February Half Term 2024 (5 days)	6,850	£3.50 per day per child	119,875
Easter Holidays 2024(11 days)	7,050	£3.50 per day per child	232,650
Total			£ 1,612,267.50

In addition, households in the borough both with and without children can apply for support funded by £440,000 for Help Harrow

Application Based Scheme

DWP guidance for Household Support Fund 4 (HSF4) sets out an expectation that local authorities will use an application-based scheme to deliver part of the funding. The principle of the scheme is in line with DWP guidance in that it intends to assist residents support those most in need to help with the rising cost of living who missed out of Government support – Cost of Living payments.

The criteria are broader than in the previous iteration of the Household Support Fund (iteration 3) where the narrow criteria may have prevented many residents from being eligible. With the HSF4 application-based scheme being administered by Citizens Advice Harrow (“the provider”), the support is more holistic in that it also offers ongoing access to finding longer-term solutions to hardship and debt advice.

Detailed eligibility requirements for the DWP Cost-of-Living Payments can be found at: [Cost of Living Payments 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-payments-2023-to-2024)

Funding

An allocation of £62,000 of Harrow’s HSF4 funding has been made to this scheme and will be distributed evenly across three rounds during 2023/24 (financial quarters 2, 3 and 4). Unspent monies from other parts of the HSF4 scheme will be prioritised

to top up the application-based scheme. Once this pot has been spent, no more applications will be considered even if they have been received before the end of the funding period.

Qualifying criteria

To qualify for a payment under the HSF4 application based scheme, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Is a Harrow resident
- Has not received a cost-of-living payment from the Government since 1 April 2023
- Must be liable for energy/fuel costs in which the property in which they live
- Need support with meeting their day to day living expenses including food and utility bills, as evidenced by 3-months of bank statements
- Has not received an award from the Household Support Fund application scheme in the last 6 months
- Is willing to comply with any reasonable conditions concerning the payment award, including for example, receiving support from advice agencies

The Council reserves the right to amend the HSF4 qualifying periods if demand for the scheme makes it necessary to either shorten or extend the qualifying periods.

Awards

Only one award will be made per household for any 6-month period. The term 'household' is as defined in section 3 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Where multiple applications are received for the same household, the award will be made to the applicant that the Council decides is entitled first, irrespective of which application was received first.

Awards will be made by issuing select codes (Blackhawk vouchers) that can be used at a number of major retailers and offset against household expenses.

The value of an award will be £200.

Once funds have been exhausted no further awards will be made. Applications that have been received before funds were exhausted but not yet decided will be refused on the basis that there are no funds with which to make payment.

Application process

The application process will take place in person, or over the phone if an in-person application is not possible.

Applicants will need to provide the following as a minimum:

- First name(s) and Surname, Address and Date of Birth
- Proof of address and identity (e.g. passport, driving license, utility bill)

- At least 3-months' worth of bank statements that prove:
 - they have not received a cost-of-living payment from the government since the 1st April 2023
 - they have not received an award from Harrow's HSF application scheme in the last 6 months
 - they are liable for energy fuel for the property in which they live
 - they need support with meeting their day to day living expenses including food and utility bills
- Need of household, categorised as; food, wider essentials and essentials linked to energy and water
- Household composition categorised as; household with children, household with pensioners, household with disabled person, other
- Is willing to comply with any reasonable conditions concerning the payment award, including for example, receiving debt or benefits advice

Applicants must be made aware of the organisation privacy notice (which must be available and updated on the organisation's website) and must read and sign and date the following declaration:

- I confirm that, as far as I know, the information given on this form is correct and complete.
- I confirm that I have not received funding from the Harrow Household Support Fund Application Scheme in the last six months and Government Cost of Living payment since 1 April 2023.
- I give you permission to make any necessary enquiries to check the information on this form.
- I understand that you may give some information to other organisations, such as government departments, local authorities and other organisations involved in Harrow's Household Support Fund scheme.

The applicant will be expected to provide any information required to support their application. Proof of address, identity and eligibility will be obtained from the applicant and stored securely to provide an audit trail.

Records will be checked to ensure the applicant has not already received an award from this application scheme in the last 6 months. Reporting checks will be confined to the purposes of this scheme and not shared beyond the fund distributing organisations.

The provider must cross check against records to highlight multiple grant applications from the same household (i.e., the same address).

Successful applicants will receive a select code which can be redeemed for a voucher and will be given information on their voucher and how to redeem it.

Multiple awards may be given by the provider in exceptional circumstances and use of best judgement.

The scheme will accept applications from 1st July 2023 across 3 rounds during 2023/24 (financial quarters 2, 3 and 4). The Council reserves the right to close the scheme early if it deems it necessary to do so, for example if funds are exhausted.

Management of funds

Voucher codes will be sent in batches to the provider, which will be held in their possession for distribution. In all cases the provider will keep clear and complete records of all vouchers administered.

The provider will need to put in place a process to correct any potential errors in the allocation of funds, such as wrongly allocated payments. The provider will be responsible for notifying Harrow Council in advance if/when they are running out of voucher codes.

Decisions

When a decision is made on a claim the applicant will be notified in writing.

If all information is not submitted as requested with the application form then the provider may decide to refuse the application. Where additional information is required that was not set out at the point of applying, the provider will contact the applicant to advise them of the information required. They will be given 10 working days to submit the information. If it is not submitted within the timescale, the application will be refused.

Appeals

There will be no right to appeal the decision of award.

Data monitoring

When needed, meetings will be held between the Council and the provider to review and discuss any challenges and assess the appropriateness of the grant criteria to achieving successful delivery.

Providers must keep an up-to-date list of applicants via a tracking spreadsheet that the council will provide.

In circumstances where multiple awards are made to the same household throughout the period of the scheme each award should be counted separately.

Reporting checks are to be confined to the purposes of this scheme and not shared beyond the distributing partners.

Quality Assurance

All payments will be approved by a member of staff at manager level or higher.

Policy review

The policy will be subject to periodic review by the Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation or their authorised officer.

Audit trail

The provider will keep a clear audit trail for decisions made at all times. This trail should detail:

- the need identified/ case for grant provision including relevant documents which evidence the applicant meets eligibility criteria
- the number of vouchers administered to the individual
- date of voucher issued
- Harrow Council will reserve the right to audit the processes and the distribution of grants, to ensure this is done in line with regulations, and the necessary measures are taken to eliminate fraud.

Combatting fraud

In order to ensure that applications for funding are not subject to abuse, all submitted applications will require a statutory declaration of truth and a statement regarding data processing. This declaration allows for the Council, through its corporate anti-fraud team, to carry out post payment checks in order to give greater assurance that the funds were claimed correctly.

Council's Hardship Fund

To avoid duplication and confusion over schemes, residents wanting to access the council's Hardship Fund will be redirected to the Household Support Fund application scheme in 2023/24, while funds remain. Should the funds in the application-based scheme run out, the council will re-open the Hardship Fund in-year.

Table 3 provides the proposed funding levels for vulnerable households, excluding those supported through FSM and HelpHarrow

Table 3: Proposed Funding for vulnerable households

Category	Estimated No. of Households	Proposed Funding per Household	Provisional Allocation of Funding (£)
Households on Housing Benefit only	1,300-1,440	£200 per round (2)	548,000
Care leavers moving to independent accommodation	150	£100 per round (2)	30,000
Application based scheme	310	£200 (max 2 per year)	62,000

Funding for other sources of support

HelpHarrow

Up to £440,000 of funding will be allocated to HelpHarrow to support provision of food aid, support and advice services to Harrow residents. Any household can self-refer by registering with the service to access support or turn up to the food market. Residents who have received assistance through other elements of the scheme are not restricted from receiving support from HelpHarrow. The number of awards is not limited so the service can provide assistance over a longer period of time where required, and therefore not only assisting with urgent needs for food but also freeing up household funds to cover essentials other than food.

Advice services

£25,000 of funding will be provided to the Conversation Café to provide advice and support to any resident within the borough. This can include debt advice and access to benefits. This is a mobile front-door to council and other services, and will help address early identification and prevention issues, especially for those who are vulnerable. Unspent monies from other parts of the scheme can be used to top up this allocation (second priority area for re-purposed funds), especially in the winter months to support the warm hub provision.

Rent Arrears

Any underspend can be allocated to rent arrears (third priority area for re-purposed funds). Eligible households will be identified through proactive action by the Council's Housing Department according to the following criteria:

- Support with rent arrears is only eligible where no other provision is available including Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or Discretionary Housing Payments.
- The award would prevent households from facing court action, eviction and secure their tenancy
- The household engages with the Council to prevent further debts arising
- Council tenants who are single people or those with disabilities
- Households in emergency and temporary accommodation and targeted at those who are vulnerable.

Awards would be distributed directly to resident's rent account / landlord.

Once funds have been exhausted no further awards will be made.

Multiple Claims

Households may receive awards from multiple elements of the Household Support Fund 4.



You will need to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) if:

- You are developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- You are making changes that will affect front-line services
- You are reducing budgets, which may affect front-line services
- You are changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
- You are making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
- You are making staff redundant or changing their roles

Guidance notes on how to complete an EqIA and sign off process are available on the Hub under Equality and Diversity. You must read the [guidance notes](#) and ensure you have followed all stages of the EqIA approval process (outlined in appendix 1). Section 2 of the template requires you to undertake an assessment of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. Equalities and borough profile data, as well as other sources of statistical information can be found on the Harrow hub, within the section entitled: [Equality Impact Assessment](#) - sources of statistical information.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)		
Type of Decision:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cabinet <input type="radio"/> Portfolio holder <input type="radio"/> Other (state)	
Title of Proposal	Household Support Fund 4	Date EqIA created: April 2023
Name and job title of completing/lead Officer	Nahreen Matlib, Senior Policy Officer	
Directorate/ Service responsible		
Organisational approval		
EqIA approved by the EDI Team:	Name: Yasmeen Hussein, EDI Policy Officer	Signature <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA Date of approval: 28.04.23

1. Summary of proposal, impact on groups with protected characteristics and mitigating actions

(to be completed **after** you have completed sections 2 - 5)

a) What is your proposal?

Harrow Council's Household Support Fund grant allocation for the period April 2023 - March 2024 is £2,953,414 which must be spent by 31st March 2024. The funding includes:

- **Free school meals** (FSM) vouchers, issued to approximately 6,500-7,000 children for each school holiday up to Easter 2024
- **Proactive voucher awards** to approximately 1450-1650 households in receipt of housing benefits who missed out on the Government cost of living payment, and care leavers moving to independent accommodation
- **HelpHarrow and the Community Hub** to provide approximately 45,000 food parcels to 9,000 households throughout the year
- An **Application Based Scheme** run within the Voluntary and Community Sector to provide support to 310 households throughout the year
- **Advice services** built upon the existing Conversation Café approach to support unpaid carers
- Any underspend on unredeemed vouchers will be recycled in order of priority
 - the application-based scheme
 - funding for the Warm Hubs in Winter 2023/24
 - to rent arrears (if not needed elsewhere)

b) Summarise the impact of your proposal on groups with protected characteristics

Based on the data available we do not anticipate that the delivery of the Household Support Fund will have any negative impact on Harrow residents or result in any direct or indirect discrimination of any group that shares protected characteristics. We expect that there will be a positive impact on residents, as the key driver of the Household Support Fund is reducing hardship and the evidence in Harrow is that some groups are more disadvantaged from an income inequality perspective than others and would as a result of the Council's proposed allocation be positively impacted.

c) Summarise any potential negative impact(s) identified and mitigating actions

This EQIA process has not identified any negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics. However, continuous monitoring will take place for each aspect of the scheme. Due to the continuous monitoring that will take place during the scheme, this means that if mitigating actions are deemed necessary, they can be carried out at any point during the scheme.

2. Assessing impact					
You are required to undertake a detailed analysis of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. You should refer to borough profile data , equalities data , service user information, consultation responses and any other relevant data/evidence to help you assess and explain what impact (if any) your proposal(s) will have on each group. Where there are gaps in data, you should state this in the boxes below and what action (if any), you will take to address this in the future.		What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics? Click the relevant box to indicate whether your proposal will have a positive impact, negative (minor, major), or no impact			
Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	
Age	<p>Harrow has a resident population of 261,205¹. It has an above average working age population aged 16-64 of just under 63% (158,000) and a growing younger population aged 0-15, which is higher than the London average, suggesting that the borough is a popular destination for families.²</p> <p>The borough has an ageing population with 51% of the population aged 45 and above, and 20% of the population aged 65 and over. It is expected that the number of residents aged 65 plus will increase by 38% and those aged 85 plus could increase by 60% by 2030³.</p> <p>Data available shows that the pandemic has adversely impacted young people aged 18-24, with 1 in 10 young people out of work⁴. Harrow has one of the lowest proportions of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETS). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in numbers, from 0.8% to 1.8%⁵.</p> <p>Impact: The Free School Meals element of the scheme will support families with children. Although the data available doesn't breakdown to assess exactly where parental age will be, it is more than likely that the majority of parents would be aged 25-60. The</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals has increased by 3% from 6263 in May 2022 to 6451 in January 2023. This Scheme will have a positive impact on those children eligible for Free School Meals as well as their parents.

The second iteration of the Household Support Fund (1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022) provided targeted support to pensioners - whilst this group will not receive targeted support in this iteration of funding, the proposed application-based scheme will have a positive impact on pensioners due to the qualifying benefits. The application-based scheme will also have a positive impact on those

Moreover, targeted support for care leavers moving to permanent accommodation will have a positive impact on young persons aged 16-24. The targeting of households on housing benefits will also have a positive impact on pensioners, people of working age and households with children. For the third iteration of HSF (1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023), the households on housing benefit cohort had the following household composition:

21/9/22 total	1573
Pensioners	814
Disabled and not pensioner	165
Child and not pensioner or disabled	263
Other	332

HelpHarrow will provide food support that reaches all age groups. During the previous iteration of the Household Support Fund (iteration 3, October 2022 to March 2023), HelpHarrow distributed 20,726 food parcels and supported 5,047 households in Harrow. Almost half of these households included children and 18% pensioners. Data from the last 6 months (September 2022 - March 2023) provided by HelpHarrow shows a breakdown of the top three age profiles supported via their food provision:

- 1) 0-17
- 2) 18-50

	<p>3) 51+</p> <p>This data suggests that there is disproportionate support for those in younger age groups compared to the pensioner age groups relative to our borough population. A third of those coming to the community hub for food support are families with children. The higher prevalence of younger residents being supported is due to a high level of families being supported through the service, especially through the direct support into schools. On this basis, taken altogether, the various elements of the scheme would have a positive impact on age.</p> <p>For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Councils Housing Benefit data shows the breakdown against age as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 608 1563 979"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Council tenants</th> <th>Temporary accommodation tenants</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>21 – 24</td> <td>5 (2%)</td> <td>1 (1%)</td> <td>6 (2%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 – 34</td> <td>16 (8%)</td> <td>8 (10%)</td> <td>24 (8%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35 – 44</td> <td>47 (23%)</td> <td>26 (34%)</td> <td>73 (26%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45 – 54</td> <td>59 (29%)</td> <td>22 (29%)</td> <td>81 (29%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55 – 64</td> <td>49 (24%)</td> <td>7 (9%)</td> <td>56 (20%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65+</td> <td>21 (10%)</td> <td>1 (1%)</td> <td>22 (8%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Data not available</td> <td>7 (3%)</td> <td>12 (16%)</td> <td>19 (7%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>204</td> <td>77</td> <td>281</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This data suggests that funding towards Rent Arrears would be likely to have a positive impact on residents aged 35-64. Furthermore, data from the previous iteration of the Household Support Fund, shows that 72% of all households helped through Rent Arrears were households with children. However, as Rent Arrears is the lowest priority of the underspend, it is unlikely that much of the allocation will be spent this way.</p>		Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total	21 – 24	5 (2%)	1 (1%)	6 (2%)	25 – 34	16 (8%)	8 (10%)	24 (8%)	35 – 44	47 (23%)	26 (34%)	73 (26%)	45 – 54	59 (29%)	22 (29%)	81 (29%)	55 – 64	49 (24%)	7 (9%)	56 (20%)	65+	21 (10%)	1 (1%)	22 (8%)	Data not available	7 (3%)	12 (16%)	19 (7%)	Total	204	77	281				
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Total	204	77	281																																						
Disability	<p>Current data shows that 31,255 of Harrow's residents have a disability which limits their day-to-day activities as defined by the Equality Act. This equates to 13.2% of the population. There is a strong correlation between disability, in particular the extent of</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																				

	<p>the disability, and economic inactivity and therefore experiencing potential financial hardship.</p> <p>Impact: With regards Free School Meals, across all Harrow schools the percentage of pupils with an Education and Healthcare Plan who are eligible for FSM increased from 19.6% (223 pupils) in 2019 to 26.9% (345 pupils) in 2021. In parallel, the percentage of pupils on SEN Support Plan who are eligible for FSM increased from 17.2% (633 pupils) in 2019 to 24.1% (867 pupils) in 2021. Pupils with No SEN who are eligible for FSM increased too, from 8.8% (2,839 pupils) in 2019 to 13.6% (4,516 pupils) in 2021.</p> <p>For the Housing Benefit cohort, data is not held on whether or not a claimant would classify themselves as having a disability, only what disability benefits they receive. Also, this information is only recorded if the services know that the benefit is received and, in most instances, only if it affects the level of entitlement. For instance, in an extract ran on 21/9/22 there were six claims where at least one member of the household in receipt of a Personal Independent Payment, and in two of these claims a member of the household was also in receipt of Employment Support Allowance. This suggests that the targeting of households on Housing benefit will have a positive impact on those with disabilities, however the impact will be difficult to quantify or monitor.</p> <p>Regarding the Care leavers cohort, there is a lack of data on if this group classifies themselves as having a disability. Support will be given to this cohort regardless of their disability status.</p> <p>The funding of advice services which will build upon Harrow's existing Conversation Café model will provide additional support to unpaid carers within the borough. Unpaid carers are a cohort that have not been targeted by previous Household Support Funds in Harrow. Therefore, through support aimed at unpaid carers, this iteration of the</p>				
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	<p>Household Support fund will have a positive impact on the families of those who are disabled in the borough.</p> <p>Disability is also an increasing reason for people requesting food support from HelpHarrow. During the third iteration of the Household Support Fund (1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023), of 5047 households supported via HelpHarrow, 745 (15%) of which were identified as Households with Disabled Person.</p> <p>Those who receive disability benefits will not be excluded from the application-based scheme. Through the application scheme and via HelpHarrow, we will be able to report as part of the monitoring information how many households with a disability have been supported, which would include physical and non-physical disabilities.</p> <p>It can be concluded that these aspects of the scheme will have a positive impact on those people and families who are disabled and in receipt of disability benefits or FSM.</p>				
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>In 2018 it was estimated there are 200,000-500,000 transgender people in the UK.⁶ For the 2021 census, people were asked: 'Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?', 262,000 (0.5%) of people answered 'No', indicating that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth⁷. 90.12% of Harrow residents described themselves as having the same gender identity as sex registered at birth (188,901 respondents). 0.53% of Harrow residents described themselves as having a gender identity which differs to the sex registered at birth but gave no specific identity (1,108 respondents). 0.15% of Harrow residents described themselves as a Trans woman (318 respondents). 0.16% of Harrow residents described themselves as a trans man (342 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as non-binary (57 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as 'All other gender identities' (59 respondents). 8.98% of Harrow residents did not respond (18,832 respondents)⁸.</p> <p>Impact: 2018</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

8 ONS 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics

8 ONS 2021 Census <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/genderidentity/bulletins/genderidentityenglandandwales/census2021>

	At this stage there is no way of concluding whether the Household Support Fund would have either a positive or negative impact on this group.				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>At the time of the 2011 Census, 54% of Harrow's residents were married, which was the highest level in London. 21% of households were married, or in same-sex civil partnerships, with dependent children, the highest level in London. In October 2020 there have been 144 Same Gender Civil Partnerships in Harrow, 25 of which has been converted to a Marriage. There have been 8 Opposite Gender Civil Partnerships. There have been 57 Same Sex marriages.</p> <p>Impact: The implementation of Household Support Fund will aim to support residents regardless of their partnership status.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>The most recent figures for birth rates in Harrow from ONS show Harrow as having 3,526 live births in 2019. 14 live births per 1000 population is higher than the England & Wales average of 10.8. The borough has the worst infant mortality rate in London, at a rate of 5.1 deaths per 1000 live births, which is a strong indicator of poverty and inequality in the borough.</p> <p>Impact: This tranche of the Household Support Fund will not target this cohort specifically, however through various means of communications, we will promote the Healthy Start Scheme (HSS), such signposting to the scheme on Harrow's Cost-of-living Support webpages website and signposting via VCS orgs. During the previous Household Support Fund, HelpHarrow included HSS leaflets when giving out baby bank resources. This will be repeated for this iteration of the Household Support Fund. The Healthy Start Scheme provides a pre-paid debit card to eligible parents/carers/ of children under four. The card enables parents to purchase essential items for young children such as cow's milk, fruit, and vegetables as well as free vitamins for both</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>mother and child. Uptake for the HSS has increased in 2023, as shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Time period</th> <th>Total eligible beneficiaries in Harrow</th> <th>Number signed up to scheme</th> <th>% uptake</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>January 2023</td> <td>1997</td> <td>1065</td> <td>53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February 2023</td> <td>1984</td> <td>1080</td> <td>54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 2023</td> <td>1958</td> <td>1095</td> <td>56%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Although the Council does not hold data on whether recipients of Free School Meals (or their parents) are either pregnant or on maternity leave the extension Household Support Fund implementation will aim to support residents regardless of their status.</p>	Time period	Total eligible beneficiaries in Harrow	Number signed up to scheme	% uptake	January 2023	1997	1065	53%	February 2023	1984	1080	54%	March 2023	1958	1095	56%				
	Time period	Total eligible beneficiaries in Harrow	Number signed up to scheme	% uptake																	
January 2023	1997	1065	53%																		
February 2023	1984	1080	54%																		
March 2023	1958	1095	56%																		
Race/ Ethnicity	<p>Harrow is one of the most culturally diverse local authorities in the UK. Current census figures show that 64% of residents are from Black, Asian, and Multi-ethnic backgrounds. The largest single ethnic group in the borough is Indian with this group comprising 28.6% of Harrow's population.</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>With regards Free School Meals, the highest proportion of pupils who are eligible are of Traveller/Irish Heritage Background (89.6% - 60 pupils). The second highest group are of White and Black Caribbean ethnic origin (34.6% - 187 pupils). The third highest group are of Black Caribbean ethnic origin (32.8% - 314 pupils). Furthermore, Black heritage, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils are disproportionately represented on the cohort of children in receipt of Free School Meals.</p> <p>For those residents accessing food support from HelpHarrow, the largest share are from an Asian or Asian British background. Also, the number of residents accessing support who are black or Black British is disproportionately higher than the general</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																

Harrow Population. Data from the last 6 months (September 2022 - March 2023) shows the top 5 ethnicities supported via HelpHarrow's food provision:

- 1) White British
- 2) Indian
- 3) Romanian
- 4) Caribbean
- 5) African

Although the council does not hold data relating to race/ethnicity for the Housing benefit and Care Leavers cohort, the proxy indicator of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents being more likely to experience barriers to work would suggest that all the elements of the Household Support Scheme will have a positive impact on those with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritage, by virtue of the relationship between barriers to employment, hardship and a higher likelihood of therefore being in receipt of financial assistance.

Therefore, we can conclude that this iteration of the Household Support Fund will have a positive impact on race/ethnicity due to disproportionately represented groups

For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Councils Housing Benefit data shows the breakdown against ethnicity as follows:

	Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total
Asian / Asian British	25 (12%)	13 (17%)	38 (14%)
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	66 (32%)	16 (20%)	82 (29%)
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	13 (6%)	2 (3%)	15 (5%)
White	50 (25%)	13 (17%)	63 (22%)
Another ethnic group	5 (2%)	2 (3%)	7 (3%)
Prefer not to say	45 (22%)	31 (40%)	76 (27%)
Total	204	77	281

	<p>This data suggests that funding towards Rent Arrears may have the greatest impact on residents of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British decent. However, as Rent Arrears is the lowest priority of the underspend, it is unlikely that much of the allocation will be spent this way.</p>				
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<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>At the 2021 Census, the most predominant religion in the borough is Christianity (37%), with 28% Hindus, 12% Muslims and 3% are Jewish. 13% stated they were atheist or had 'no religion'. As the population's ethnic composition changes, rates of participation in various religions are also likely to change⁹. There is limited data on employment/unemployment rates for Harrow by religion. Data for London suggests that educational attainment and</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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⁹ Harrow Economic Assessment: 2019-2020: population

	<p>employment among the capital's Muslim community is lower than those from other faith groups located in the borough¹⁰.</p> <p>Impact: The previous Household Support Fund allocated £5,000 towards setting up a Network of 40 Warm Hubs that were open to everyone and 16 were run by faith organisations. The fourth iteration of the Household Support Fund will support Warm Hubs in Winter 2023/24 with the underspend from the voucher scheme.</p> <p>Overall, the scheme will aim to support all residents regardless of their religion or belief, and where possible, monitoring information will be obtained to understand the impact on this characteristic.</p>				
Sex	<p>The latest census figures show that Harrow has a population of 132,406 females (50.69%) and 128,797 males (49.31%). Economic activity among Harrow's male population is higher than the London average at 86%, compared with 83%¹¹. However, economic activity among females in the borough is lower than the London average at 72%.</p> <p>Harrow is a low wage borough, with both men and women that are employed in the borough earning less than the London average of £760¹² earning less compared to men. Women earn less than men in the borough. Average gross weekly earnings among women working in Harrow is £500, 38% lower than the London average of £688¹³.</p> <p>In the 2021 Census, 90.12% of Harrow residents described themselves as having the same gender identity as sex registered at birth (188,901 respondents). 0.53% of Harrow residents described themselves as having a gender identity which differs to the sex registered at birth, but gave no specific identity (1,108 respondents). 0.15% of Harrow residents described</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹⁰ Annual Population Survey 2018.

¹¹ NOMIS: Labour supply, December 2020

¹² NOMIS: earnings by place of work 2020

¹³ NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2020

themselves as a Trans woman (318 respondents). 0.16 of Harrow residents described themselves as a trans man (342 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as non binary (57 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as 'All other gender identities' (59 respondents). 8.98% of Harrow residents did not respond (18,832 respondents)¹⁴.

Impact:

With regards Free School Meals, there is a marginal difference between the proportion of male pupils who were eligible for FSM than the proportion of female pupils. This difference does not suggest there is any disproportionate impact with regards gender for pupils in receipt of Free School Meals.

For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Councils Housing Benefit data shows the breakdown against female and male headed households as follows:

	Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total
Female headed household	136 (67%)	55 (71%)	191 (68%)
Male headed household	61 (30%)	19 (25%)	80 (28%)
Data not available	7 (3%)	3 (4%)	10 (4%)
Total	204	77	281

As more households in council housing or temporary accommodation are occupied by women, there is a higher likelihood that the scheme will have a more positive impact on women than men. However, as Rent Arrears is the lowest priority of the underspend, it is unlikely that much of the allocation will be spent this way.

On the basis that economic activity is lower in women than in men and earnings are less in women than men, there is a higher likelihood that the scheme will have a more positive impact on women than men. However, the Household Support Scheme is targeted at all

¹⁴ 2021 Government Census, Office for National Statistics

	groups who face financial hardship, which will have a positive impact on residents, regardless of their gender.				
Sexual Orientation	<p>2021 Census data from 2018 87.2% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Straight or Heterosexual’ (182702 respondents). 0.6% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Gay or Lesbian’ (1361 respondents). 0.9% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Bisexual’ (1873 respondents). 0.5% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘All other sexual orientations’ (1005 respondents) 10.8% of Harrow residents did not answer (22680 respondents)¹⁵.</p> <p>Impact: Although there is not any data the Council holds for housing benefit or Free School Meals on the sexual orientation of recipients (or their parents), there is a higher likelihood that families with children will be heterosexual couples. Therefore, the Household Support Fund is more likely to have a positive impact on those whose sexual orientation is heterosexual. However, the implementation of the scheme will aim to support residents regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.1 Cumulative impact – considering what else is happening within the Council and Harrow as a whole, could your proposals have a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

2.2 Any other impact - considering what else is happening nationally/locally (national/local/regional policies, socio-economic factors etc.), could your proposals have an impact on individuals/service users, or other groups?

¹⁵ 2021 Government Census, Office for National Statistics

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, Include details in the space below

3. Actions to mitigate/remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your assessment (in section 2) suggests that your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. If you have not identified any negative impacts, please complete sections 4 and 5.

In the table below, please state what these potential negative impact (s) are, mitigating actions and steps taken to ensure that these measures will address and remove any negative impacts identified and by when. Please also state how you will monitor the impact of your proposal once implemented.

State what the negative impact(s) are for each group, identified in section 2. In addition, you should also consider, and state potential risks associated with your proposal.	Measures to mitigate negative impact (provide details, including details of and additional consultation undertaken/to be carried out in the future). If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.	What action (s) will you take to assess whether these measures have addressed and removed any negative impacts identified in your analysis? Please provide details. If you have previously stated that you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact please state below.	Deadline date	Lead Officer

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4. Public Sector Equality Duty

How does your proposal meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
3. Foster good relations between people from different groups

Include details in the space below

1. The Scheme (Household Support Fund, fourth iteration) will help to advance the equality of opportunity for groups who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not by addressing inequalities around access to financial support for many groups in financial hardship.
2. The Scheme (Household Support Fund, fourth iteration) will help foster good relations between communities through the creation of financial support for those most in need.
3. The Scheme (Household Support Fund, fourth iteration) will provide support to Harrow's Conversation Café and Warm Hubs. These models have demonstrated positive outcomes around social integration and tackling loneliness.

5. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) click the box that applies

Outcome 1

No change required: the EQIA has not identified any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Outcome 2

Adjustments to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment, or to better advance equality, as stated in section 3&4

<input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 3 This EqIA has identified discrimination and/ or missed opportunities to advance equality and/or foster good relations. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below.
Include details here

Guidance for completing the Delivery Plan for Household Support Fund 4

Before completing this template, please refer to the 'Delivery Plan reporting requirements' section of the detailed guidance document.

Please ensure you complete the following tabs:

- 1 - Governance
- 2 - Anticipated Spend
- 3 - Anticipated Volumes
- 4 - Anticipated No of Households
- 5 - Planned Activities

The delivery plan should cover the anticipated value of grants for vulnerable households.

You need to return the delivery plan by 17 May 2023.

When submitting your delivery plan to DWP; please attach and name the excel spreadsheet as follows -

Filename: HSF4DP_RRR_MMY (where RRR is your LA code and date of return is in MMY format) for example Brighton & Hove Unitary Authority's May 2023 return would be labelled **HSF4DP_007_0523.xlsx**.

Send the completed delivery plan, **including the name of your LA in the subject line** to the DWP to:


lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk


Your delivery plan must include your Cabinet Member's name and email address. The aim of this process is to provide assurance the delivery plan is accurate. **We also require you to copy the email of your Cabinet Member into the email sent to DWP when you return the delivery plan.**

Reasonable administration costs are funded as part of the grant.

Traffic Light Guidance System

The Traffic Light Guidance System is used throughout the delivery plan to help inform the user and the Cabinet Member of any outstanding required inputs.

The green circle with a white tick indicates that the adjacent table is compliant: 

The red circle with a white cross indicates that the adjacent table is non-compliant: 

HSF4 Delivery plan



1) LA details

Local authority	LA code	Has the return been completed in full?
Harrow	LA141	✔

Notes
To complete the Governance tab, please ensure to:
a) choose your Local Authority name in Table 1
b) enter the return date in Table 2 (dd/mm/yyyy)
c) complete all cells in Table 3

A summary and explanation of the traffic light system is included below and in the guidance tab. It details how the system is applied throughout the template.

When a green circle with a white tick appears next to Tables 1 to 3, the tables are compliant.

When a green circle with a white tick appears in Table 1 'Has the return been completed in full?', the delivery plan is compliant and ready for submission.

2) Reporting period

Reporting period	Report type	Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)
01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024	Delivery Plan	15/05/23

3) Governance

Cabinet Member (name)	Cabinet Member's email	Is the Cabinet Member copied into the return email? (dropdown)	Section 151 Officer (name)	Section 151 Officer's email	Is the Section 151 Officer/CFO copied into the return email?
Councillor Stephen Greek	stephen.greek@harrow.gov.uk	Yes	Dawn Calvert	dawn.calvert@harrow.gov.uk	Yes

4) Totals

Anticipated spend for vulnerable households (£)	Anticipated admin costs (£)	Anticipated total LA spend (£)	Allocation (£)	Percentage of allocation accounted for in delivery plan (%)
£ 2,717,267.00	£ 236,000.00	£ 2,953,267.00	£ 2,953,414	100%

Traffic Light Guidance System

The traffic light guidance system is used throughout this workbook to help inform the user, Cabinet Member and Section 151 officer of any outstanding required inputs. The icons can be found next to each table.

The green circle with a white tick indicates that the adjacent table is compliant: ✔

The red circle with a white cross indicates that the adjacent table is non-compliant: ✘

For LA-PED use only:

Governance	✔
Spend	✔
Volumes	✔
Households helped	✔
Planned activities	✔

End

HSF4 Anticipated spend

Notes

The totals cells which autopopulate have been greyed out and locked for editing. Please only input into the green cells.

The totals in the autopopulated cells of tables 6 to 9 must be the same for the return to be compliant.

Please input values in full (e.g. 120,000.00) to enable us to process the return accordingly. Only numbers (eg 123.00) can be entered into each cell. If any other format is inputted an error message will appear.

The traffic light system will help you ensure the template is completed in full. **For the return to be compliant, all traffic lights must be green with a white tick.**

If there is no anticipated spend to report, in order to enable the green light with white tick next to each table, the cells should still be completed with 0 (zero as a numerical value rather than typing out 'NIL', for example). This will help us process the return promptly for you.

'Has the spend tab been completed correctly?' - the traffic light will turn green with a white tick once Tables 5 to 9 are compliant.

The acronym FSM used in the tables below refers to Free School Meals.

5) Anticipated admin spend	
Admin spend	
£	236,000.00

Traffic light check	
Has the anticipated spend tab been completed correctly?	
✔	

6) Anticipated spend (£) split by household composition				
Households with children (£)	Households with pensioners (£)	Households with a disabled person (£)	Other households (£)	Anticipated total spend (by household composition) (£)
£1,988,895.78	£ 327,299.87	£ 121,094.99	£ 279,976.36	£ 2,717,267.00

7) Anticipated spend (£) split by category							
Food (excluding FSM support in the holidays) (£)	FSM support in the holidays (£)	Energy and water (£)	Essentials linked to energy and water (£)	Wider essentials (£)	Housing costs (£)	Advice services (£)	Anticipated total spend (by category) (£)
£ 1,073,000.00	£ 1,612,267.00	£ -	£ 2,400.00	£ 4,600.00	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 2,717,267.00

8) Anticipated spend (£) split by types of support					
Vouchers (£)	Cash awards (£)	Third party organisations (£)	Tangible items (£)	Other (£)	Anticipated total spend (by types of support) (£)
£ 640,000.00	£ 1,612,267.00	£ 440,000.00	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 2,717,267.00

9) Anticipated spend (£) split by access routes			
Application-based support (£)	Proactive support (£)	Other (£)	Anticipated total spend (by access routes) (£)
£ 62,000.00	£ 2,190,267.00	£ 465,000.00	£ 2,717,267.00

End

HSF4 Anticipated volumes

Notes

The totals cells which autopopulate have been greyed out and locked for editing. Please only input into the blue cells.

Please only input whole numbers. If any other format is inputted an error message will appear.

The traffic light system will help you ensure the template is completed in full. For the return to be compliant, all traffic lights must be green with a white tick.

If there are no anticipated volumes to report, in order to enable the green light with white tick next to each table, the cells should still be completed with 0 (zero as a numerical value rather than typing out 'NIL', for example).

The acronym FSM used in the tables below refers to Free School Meals.

10) Anticipated volume of awards split by household composition

Households with children	Households with pensioners	Households with a disabled person	Other households	Anticipated total volume of awards (by household composition)
76622	7464	4943	6955	95984

11) Anticipated volume of awards split by category

Food (excluding FSM support in the holidays)	FSM support in the holidays	Energy and water	Essentials linked to energy and water	Wider essentials	Housing costs	Advice services	Anticipated total volume of awards (by category)
45189	50260	0	12	23	0	500	95984

12) Anticipated volume of awards split by types of support

Vouchers	Cash awards	Third party organisations	Tangible items	Other	Anticipated total volume of awards (by types of support)
3200	50260	42024	0	500	95984

13) Anticipated volume of awards split by access routes

Application-based support	Proactive support	Other support	Anticipated total volume of awards (by access routes)
310	53150	42524	95984

End

HSF4 Anticipated number of households helped

Notes

The totals cells which autopopulate have been greyed out and locked for editing. Please only input into the blue cells.

Please only input whole numbers. If any other format is inputted an error message will appear.

The traffic light system will help you ensure the template is completed in full. For the return to be compliant, all traffic lights must be green with a white tick.

If there are no anticipated numbers to report, in order to enable the green light with white tick next to each table, the cells should still be completed with 0 (zero as a numerical value rather than typing out 'NIL', for example).

The acronym FSM used in the tables below refers to Free School Meals.

14) Anticipated number of households helped split by household composition

Households with children	Households with pensioners	Households with a disabled person	Other households	Anticipated total number of vulnerable households helped (by household composition)
12062	3384	1935	3734	21115

15) Anticipated number of households helped split by category

Food (excluding FSM support in the holidays)	FSM support in the holidays	Energy and water	Essentials linked to energy and water	Wider essentials	Housing costs	Advice services	Anticipated total number of vulnerable households helped (by category)
13830	6750	0	12	23	0	500	21115

16) Anticipated number of households helped split by types of support

Vouchers	Cash awards	Third party organisations	Tangible items	Other	Anticipated total number of vulnerable households helped (by types of support)
3200	6750	10665	0	500	21115

17) Anticipated number of households helped split by access routes

Application-based support	Proactive support	Other	Anticipated total number of vulnerable households helped (by access routes)
310	9640	11165	21115

End



Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	25 May 2023
Subject:	Pension Fund Procurements for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Services
Key Decision:	Yes - the total value of each of the two contracts is likely to exceed £500,000, all of which will be revenue expenditure
Responsible Officer:	Dawn Calvert – Director of Finance and Assurance
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr David Ashton - Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources
Exempt:	No, except for Appendix 2, which is exempt under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the current contractors and the council and a procurement exercise is pending.
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	None
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Report to Pension Fund Committee 29 March 2023. Appendix 2 (Exempt) – Current and Estimated Costs of the new contracts

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the process to ensure that the Council has new contracts for Pension Fund Actuarial Advice and Investment Consultancy Services as the existing ones expire.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to

1. Approve the proposed arrangements for procuring two contracts, firstly for Pension Fund Actuarial Advice Services and secondly for Pension Fund Investment Consultancy Services, and
2. Approve the commencement of the re-procurement of the two contracts via the National Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Frameworks
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer), following consultation with the Chair of Harrow's Pension Fund Committee and the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Human Resources (if this is different to the chair) to
 - approve the tender documents
 - award the contracts once tenders have been received and evaluated.

Reason (for the recommendations): To facilitate a compliant procurement and hence to ensure that the Council continues to have contracts in place to enable it to obtain the appropriate expertise and advice so as to meet its statutory obligations as the administering authority for the London Borough of Harrow Pension Fund.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The Council is the Administering Authority for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in Harrow. This means it is responsible for managing all aspects of the Harrow Pension Fund in accordance with the LGPS Regulations 2013 and the LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016. To comply with those Regulations, the Council is required to obtain specialist advice in respect of both actuarial services and investment of funds. The existing contracts for these services expire in the next year, hence the requirement to procure new contracts.

Options considered

1. In its capacity as Administering Authority for the LBH pension fund, the Council is required by the various LGPS Regulations to have contracts in place for these services.

2. The following options were rejected - the reasons for rejection are shown in each case
 - Open tender – as suitable LGPS frameworks exist, open tender would be a much less efficient route.
 - Direct award - the frameworks do not permit this approach and therefore doing so would be in breach of public procurement rules.
 - Extend existing contracts – this approach would be in breach of public procurement rules.

Preferred Option

3. To carry out procurements for the two contracts using the National LGPS frameworks, which have been developed using a process which is fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Background

4. The Council is the LGPS Administering Authority for the Harrow Pension Fund. In this capacity, to meet the requirements of the LGPS Regulations 2013 and the LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016, it must have in place contracts for the provision of Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Advice.
5. The current contract for Actuarial Services expires in September 2023, and the contract for Investment Consultancy Advice expires in January 2024, hence it is necessary to procure new contracts to ensure continuity of service.
6. A report to the Pension Fund Committee on 29 March 2023 sets out the background in more detail – this is attached at Appendix 1.

Current Situation

7. The administering authorities for the 89 LGPS Funds in England all require a range of specialist services to carry out their statutory functions and meet their responsibilities as set out in the LGPS Regulations 2013 and the LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.
8. To simplify the procurement process for individual administering authorities, a group of LGPS administering authorities led by Norfolk County Council have developed procurement frameworks covering the various services which all LGPS Funds require to fulfil their statutory responsibilities as administering authorities for the LGPS.
9. The frameworks are fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. In setting up the frameworks, a standard specification was developed and all interested providers were invited to tender and meet rigorous quality thresholds – hence only those providers who are capable of meeting these minimum quality standards

are listed on the framework. This means that for Harrow the procurement process is simplified and more efficient, enabling the tender process to focus on identifying the provider which is most suitable to meet Harrow's requirements.

10. Harrow has previously used the LGPS frameworks to award various Pension Fund contracts, including the current contracts for Actuarial Advice and Investment Consultancy Services. Both frameworks have been updated since Harrow last tendered, which means that they remain up to date in regard to current best practice in the LGPS.
11. In each case, direct award is not possible, hence Harrow will need to conduct a "mini tender" seeking bids from the firms listed on the relevant framework.

Contract One: Actuarial Advice Services

12. The Pension Fund is required to have a full valuation of its assets and liabilities every three years. This work is carried out by the actuary, and the process, which includes setting employer contribution rates for all of the London Borough of Harrow Pension Fund's employers (there are more than 40 of these) and takes a year from the nominal valuation date to complete (e.g., the most recent of these, as at 31 March 2022, was completed in March 2023). Therefore, actuarial contracts would normally be awarded for a multiple of three years – to ensure that tendering processes are not being carried out alongside the triennial valuations (as this would create capacity issues for both LBH officers and the actuarial firms).
13. In the professional journals and in LGPS professional networks in the UK it has been suggested that Government may consider changing this actuarial cycle from 3 years to 4 years at some point, The framework for actuarial services provides for contracts of up to 10 years, with a latest expiry date of June 2035.
14. Taking these factors into account, it is proposed that the contract for actuarial services be awarded for 6 years, with an option to extend by up to 4 years (subject to satisfactory performance). This will provide flexibility in ensuring that the next re-procurement can be carried out at the correct point in the valuation cycle, even if that is changed from 3 to 4 years.

Contract Two: Investment Consultancy Services

15. The contract covers matters relating to the Fund's Investment strategy, including advising on asset allocation, investment risks, manager monitoring and selection, and provision of information for investment reporting for quarterly Committee meetings and the Fund's annual report.
16. Although it is considered best practice for each LGPS fund to carry out a review of its investment strategy immediately after the triennial

valuation results have been finalised, this actuarial cycle is not a critical factor in the timing of the retendering process for this contract. However, to avoid reprocurring both contracts simultaneously, it would be preferable if this contract did not expire at a similar time to the actuarial contract in future.

17. The framework provides for contracts of up to 7 years, with a latest contract expiry date of 31 October 2033.

18. Therefore, taking account of the above, it is proposed that the new contract be awarded for a period of 4 years, with an option to extend for up to 3 years, (subject to satisfactory performance).

Implications of the Recommendation

Costs

19. The costs of the proposed contract are set out in Appendix 2 (exempt) They will be fully met by the Pension Fund.

Staffing/workforce

20. There are no staffing / workforce implications of the proposed decision.

Ward Councillors' comments

21. Not applicable

Performance Issues

22. The current providers for Actuarial Services (Hymans Robertson LLP) and Investment Consultancy Advice Services (Aon) are providing a good service. There have been no performance issues with the current contracts and both the Pension Fund Committee and officers have been satisfied with the level of service received.

Environmental Implications

23. There are no specific environmental implications arising from the proposed decisions. In both contracts, but in particular the contract for Investment Consultancy Services contract, the chosen provider will be required to take account of current regulatory guidance and to give appropriate consideration to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Issues and to the Harrow Pension fund's Responsible Investment Policy.

Data Protection Implications

24. The work required to value Pension Fund liabilities and to assess employer contribution rates requires the provider of actuarial service to have information in respect of individual scheme members. The current contract has appropriate arrangements for data transfer using a secure

portal, and should a different provider be appointed, they will be required to have similar compliant arrangements in place (these are standard for provision of this service in the LGPS).

Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are summarised below. **No**

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
If the procurement is not approved the Council will have insufficient advice and expertise in place to fully discharge its statutory responsibilities on the Pension Fund in 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report sets out the process by which compliant procurements can be carried out and hence contracts put in place. 	Green
An open tender route is not being followed to procure the contracts leading to the market for these services not being sufficiently tested for VFM and quality considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LGPS frameworks are fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. All providers listed on the frameworks have been through a rigorous process to ensure that only those which can meet the required quality threshold for the services are included on the framework. 	Green
The procurement is not undertaken in full compliance with the Council's tendering and procurement rules and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LGPS frameworks are fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, and have been used by Harrow previously. The frameworks require a "mini competition" under which bidders will be evaluated against specific quality and price metrics to provide best value in 	Green

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	meeting Harrow's requirements.	

While the specific risks related to the decisions required in this report are highlighted above, it should be noted that the proposed contracts will ensure that Harrow has the required specialist technical expertise in place as part of its arrangements to mitigate the strategic funding and investment risks which are listed on the Pension Fund's Risk Register.

Procurement Implications

The contracts for the Pension Fund Procurements for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Services will be procured in accordance with the Councils Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. These services will be procured compliantly via the National LGPS Framework.

Legal Implications

The contracts for the Pension Fund Actuarial Services and Investment Consultancy Services will be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, under the current lawfully established National LGPS Framework agreement in accordance with the Framework rules, and in accordance with the Councils Contract Procedure Rules.

The Pension Fund administering authority must comply with the LGPS Regulations 2013 and the LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.

Financial Implications

The cost of joining the two relevant LGPS frameworks is £8,000 as follows

- Actuarial service £3,000
- Investment Consultancy services £5,000.

This fee provides access to all the relevant documentation and will be met from the Pension Fund.

The annual cost of the current contracts are shown in Appendix 2. It is envisaged that the new contracts will be similar, although they are likely to be slightly higher reflecting some impact of recent inflation pressures. These costs will be met from the Pension Fund.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Council Priorities

- 1. A council that puts residents first**
- 2. A borough that is clean and safe**
- 3. A place where those in need are supported**

These contracts support the Harrow Pension Fund in ensuring that employer contributions are kept stable and as low as possible while ensuring that the Fund is able to pay scheme members' pensions when they fall due. Having adequate pensions helps to address poverty in retirement, and in doing so assists in improving health outcomes.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 28/04/2023

Statutory Officer: Stephen Dorian

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 03/05/2023

Chief Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed off on behalf of the Corporate Director

Date: 28/04/2023

Head of Procurement: Lisa Taylor

Signed on behalf of the Head of Procurement

Date: 28/04/2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 04.05.23

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: NO

The decisions required will ensure the Council has contracts in place to manage the Harrow Pension Fund in accordance with the Regulations.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jeremy Randall – Interim Pensions Manager, email: Jeremy.randall@harrow.gov.uk, Tel: 020 8736 6552,

Background Papers: None

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO

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**Report for: Pension Fund
Committee**

Date of Meeting:	29 March 2023
Subject:	Arrangements for Pension Fund Procurements in 2023
Responsible Officer:	Dawn Calvert – Director of Finance and Assurance
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	List Ward(s) affected by decision. Not applicable
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report summarises the arrangements for the procurements of the contracts for Actuarial Services and Investment Consultancy Advice as the current contracts will expire during the 2023-24 financial year.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to

1. note the report.
2. Approve the proposed arrangements for procurement of new contracts for Actuarial Services and for Investment Consultancy Advice using the National LGPS Frameworks as set out in paragraphs 13 and 18 below.

Section 2 – Report

1. To carry out its statutory role effectively, the LBH Pension Fund needs to have in place a number of contracts for the provision of specialist services. Two of the most important of these are Actuarial Services and Investment Consultancy Services. The existing contracts for these services will both expire during the 2023-24 financial year. The following

paragraphs summarise the planned approach to ensuring that new contracts are put in place.

2. In each case, it is appropriate to have a contract which runs for a significant period to provide value for money, continuity of service and importantly to ensure that re-procurement is not a distraction for either the Fund's officers or for the service provider at critical points – see paragraphs 8 to 10 below.
3. As a result, in each case the estimated total value of the contracts (taking account of any flexibility to extend the contracts) is such that, to comply with the Council's procurement requirements, the process will require authority from Cabinet. It is intended that this will be sought from the Cabinet's May meeting.
4. The national LGPS Frameworks (led by Norfolk CC) have developed a range of framework contracts to aid procurement of services common to all LGPS administering authorities. The nature of the LGPS means that these services are of a specialist nature with a limited number of experienced providers. This simplifies the process as the framework colleagues have done a significant amount of work in evaluating and ensuring that only providers who can deliver the range of services required by an LGPS Fund are included on each framework.
5. The last time these services were procured the Fund made use of the frameworks, and as there are updated frameworks in place for both services, it is intended that we do so again. The costs of accessing the frameworks are
 - Actuarial services £3,000
 - Investment Consultancy Services £5,000This fee provides access to the procurement documentation. Subject to the numbers / value of contracts awarded to the chosen provider by participating LGPS funds, there are likely to be annual fee discounts rebated to the Fund through the contract periods.
6. The following paragraphs set out more specific information about each of the two contracts.

Actuarial Services

7. The LGPS Regulations 2013 require the Fund to carry out a triennial revaluation of the whole Fund's assets and liabilities, and to do this the services of an appropriately qualified actuary are required.
8. The current contract for Actuarial and Benefits Consulting with Hymans Robertson LLP expires in September 2023. There are some practical considerations in determining the length / timing of this contract as set out in the following paragraphs.
9. The largest task in this contract is the triennial valuation – which takes up more than a year in practice – taking the most recent (31 March 2022) valuation as an example, preparatory work began in the last quarter of 2021, the bulk of the detailed work was done between June and

December of 2022 and the final report will be issued in March 2023. (There is a statutory deadline of 31 March). The valuation is a major task both for the Fund's officers (in providing the necessary data and communicating the valuation outcome to the various scheme employers) and for the actuary in carrying out the detailed valuation work. Therefore, in awarding a contract, it is necessary to ensure that the subsequent procurement will not need to be done whilst a future triennial valuation is in progress.

10. A second significant task is the provision of accounting information (FRS 102 / IAS 19) to scheme employers each year. This work is done shortly after the various employers' year ends, and there are 3 key dates on which most employers' year ends occur – 31 March for the Council, 31 July for colleges and 31 August for Academy Schools.
11. There are other tasks required on a more ad hoc basis – these include calculation of contribution rates for new employers (such as a school converting to an academy) and cessation calculations when an employer has no further active members (such as a TUPE contractor at the end of a contract).
12. The framework provides for contracts of up to 10 years, with a latest expiry date of June 2035.
13. Therefore, taking account of the above, it is proposed that the new contract be awarded for a period of 6 years and 3 months to expire in December 2029, with an option to extend by up to 4 years (subject to satisfactory performance). This will provide flexibility to avoid the Fund being required to re-procure at the “wrong” time should the Government change the revaluation cycle from 3 to 4 years (a possibility which has been mentioned in some quarters).

Investment Consultancy Services

14. The LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 require each LGPS fund to “take proper advice from suitably qualified persons” in setting its investment strategy and making investment decisions. To meet this requirement, the Fund therefore has in place a contract for Investment Consultancy Services.
15. The current contract, with Aon, expires in January 2024. The contract covers matters relating to the Fund's Investment strategy, including advising on asset allocation, investment risks, manager monitoring and selection, and provision of information for investment reporting for quarterly Committee meetings and the Fund's annual report.
16. The constraints on timing which relate to regard to the actuarial contract are less onerous in respect of this one. However, given the small team of officers working on this, it would be preferable if this contract did not expire at a similar time to the actuarial contract in future.
17. The framework provides for contracts for up to 7 years, with a latest contract expiry date of 31 October 2033.

18. Therefore, taking account of the above, it is proposed that the new contract be awarded for a period of 4 years, with an option to extend for up to 3 years, subject to satisfactory performance).

Legal Implications

19. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

20. The Pension Fund Committee has the following powers and duties:

- i. to exercise on behalf of the Council, all the powers and duties of the Council in relation to its functions as Administering Authority of the LB Harrow Pension Fund (the fund), save for those matters delegated to other Committees of the Council or to an Officer;
- ii. the determination of applications under the Local Government Superannuation Regulations and the Teachers' Superannuation Regulations;
- iii. to administer all matters concerning the Council's pension investments in accordance with the law and Council policy;
- iv. to establish a strategy for the disposition of the pension investment portfolio; and
- v. to appoint and determine the investment managers' delegation of powers of management of the fund;
- vi. to determine cases that satisfy the Early Retirement provision under Regulation 26 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended), and to exercise discretion under Regulations 8 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 (as amended, subject to the conditions now agreed in respect of all staff, excluding Chief Officers;
- vii. to apply the arrangements set out in (vi) above to Chief Officers where the application has been recommended by the Chief Executive, either on the grounds of redundancy, or in the interests of the efficiency of the service, and where the application was instigated by the Chief Executive in consultation with the leaders of the political groups.

Financial Implications

21. There are no immediate financial implications arising from the report. However, once the reporting requirements are defined and incorporated into Regulations, there will be a cost in compiling the relevant information. These costs will be met from the Pension Fund.

Risk Management Implications

22. The Pension Fund's Risk Register is reviewed regularly by the Committee. The most recent review was considered at the 23 November 2022 meeting of the Committee.
23. There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

24. Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No
25. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Council Priorities

26. The performance of the Pension Fund directly affects the level of employer contribution which then, in turn, affects the resources available for the Council's priorities.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 14/03/2023

Statutory Officer: Sharon Clarke

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 14/03/2023

Chief Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed on behalf of the Chief Executive

Date: 14/03/2023

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: Not Applicable

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jeremy Randall – Interim Pensions Manager
Email: Jeremy.randall@harrow.gov.uk
Telephone 020 8736 6552

Background Papers: None



Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	25 th May 2023
Subject:	New Council Logo
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap - Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Paul Osborn - Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy; Councillor Stephen Greek - Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications & Customer Experience
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Approved final versions of the new logo

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out to refresh the Council logo with a new design that marries traditional values with a modern view of Harrow, giving residents a visual representation of Harrow that they can have pride in

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to approve:

1. the adoption of the new Council logo
2. that the Council will be referred to formally as The London Borough of Harrow

Reason: (for recommendations)

To enable the adoption and roll out of a new Council logo, supporting the Council's aim to restore pride in Harrow

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

At Cabinet on the 24th May 2022 it was agreed to commence work on redesigning a new Council logo, in order to create better brand awareness with residents of the Council and its services, and restore pride in Harrow and its heritage at zero or negligible additional cost.

This report presents the recommended new logo that resulted from this work and approach to its roll-out at minimum cost.

Options considered

Replace the existing logo

This option is detailed in the report below.

Do nothing

The current logo is increasingly dated design-wise, and its base oblong shape is a poor fit for new digital mediums such as social media.

Not updating the logo would mean that we continue to use the existing logo and make concessions for the limited design.

Background

The existing logo

Our current logo has been in existence for more than 15 years. The lozenge design is now looking dated, and its relevance is now questionable.



In addition, over more recent years a secondary logo has evolved across our digital presence and assets, so it is felt that this could give a mixed identity of the Council to the public.

To maximise our brand as an organisation, we needed to consolidate into one new logo that was appropriate to be used across all internal and external platforms, physical and digital formats and signalling that we are 'one council', serving the residents of Harrow.

The logo redesign

At Cabinet on the 24th May 2022 it was agreed to commence work on redesigning the Council logo, in order to create better brand awareness with residents of the Council and its services, at zero or negligible additional cost.

To ensure this was delivered in the most cost-effective way while remaining authentic to Harrow, a competition was arranged for the students of Harrow College and Westminster University to submit potential designs for the new logo. The winner was given a £250 voucher for their submission.

The design brief asked entrants to evolve our Civic Coat of Arms so that it is visually more modern, reflecting a contemporary, well designed and stylish image whilst retaining our historical cues.

The new logo and rollout



The new logo is available in purple and white, with matching inverse colours, and black and white, with matching inverse colours.

It has been designed to be long lasting and easily recognisable through both the shape and design of the crest.

The new logo is flexible and adaptable with a model that is scalable for use on small assets such as embroidered clothing up to large signs and vehicle sides. The logo is also available in both an inline and stacked version (ie landscape and portrait images) ensuring there is an appropriate version for use on all physical and digital assets.

The new logo consists of the following elements:

- 1 – Mural Crown representing Harrow as a town
- 2 – Torch representing Harrow's excellence in education
- 3 – Handel's organ representing Harrow's musical history
- 4 – Quill representing Harrow's links to writing and poetry
- 5 – Green belt representing Harrow's green suburban setting
- 6 – The Harrow Weald and Harrow on the Hill
- 7 – Harrow's motto (translated as 'the People's Welfare is the Highest Law')

The roll-out of the logo will be carried out at minimal cost. Physical signage will be replaced when it reaches the end of its natural life so no additional costs are incurred. Digital manifestations of the logo will be updated when appropriate within officer workloads.

The Council has been referred to as Harrow Council, London since the roll out of the previous logo over 15 years ago. It is intended that following the approval of this report the Council would revert to the London Borough of Harrow in all communications and branding. If anything, the move to 'Harrow Council' was done without any changes to the Council as a legal entity as we retain the use of the London Borough of Harrow through our legal contracts with third parties for instance.

Following approval from Cabinet the roll out of the new logo and use of the London Borough of Harrow will begin in June across signage that is already planned and costed for, and across digital assets such as the website and social media.

Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below.

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
The new logo doesn't work on all assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An extensive engagement has taken place across all asset owners to take account of their needs in the design and use of the design of the logo 	GREEN
Roll out takes longer than expected. Costs could be incurred if the old logo is used on any new assets delivered from the point of launch of the new logo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The expectation is that this will take a number of years, so the key will be being aware of the timetable of renewal from everything from bins to fleet, to system generated letter heads to social media and digital assets. Therefore all aspects will be planned to take account of the new logo 	GREEN
There is insufficient information and advance official communication given residents on the new logo resulting in a mixed or confusing identity of the Council given to residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residents will receive clear communications on the new logo via Harrow People and all digital channels 	GREEN
There is inadequate staff awareness of the new logo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications Team currently preparing a full launch of the logo with staff in May ▪ Engaging with key stakeholders of the logo (e.g. Environment) has already started 	AMBER
Clear written guidance on the use of the new logo is not made available to staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand guidance will be produced and be ready for launch of the logo to provide staff with guidance on use of the logo and this will be via signposting to digital platforms at the Council 	GREEN

Procurement Implications

There are no procurement implications associated with the recommendations set out at the beginning of this report. Any procurement required to support

the rollout of the new logo will be undertaken consistent with the Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal Implications

The London Borough of Harrow, along with the other London boroughs, was created on 1 April 1965 by the London Government Act 1963 and is known as a London borough council.

Under the Local Government Act 1972, the London Borough of Harrow is constituted as a corporation having legal personality, administered by the council, which exercises the powers and functions given to it by statute in the local government area under its control.

The new logo reflects this legal framework.

Financial Implications

The roll out is expected to take a number of years with assets updated as and when it was coming to the end of its natural life or was being replaced.

Costs will be incurred when physical assets are replaced, but as this will be part of the existing cycle of replacing existing assets this will be contained in existing budgets. To avoid any additional costs, the new logo must be used on any new assets following the go-live date.

Digital changes, such as social media and the website will be changed at zero cost by the teams that own these assets.

It is noted that the costs to date are less than £500.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

N/A

Council Priorities

The new logo supports all the corporate priorities, but principally drives the vision of *A Council that Puts Residents First*.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed on by the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17/5/23

Statutory Officer: Stephen Dorrian

Signed on behalf of Monitoring Officer

Date: 17/5/23

Chief Officer: Alex Dewsnap

Signed off by the Corporate Director

Date: 17/5/23

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed on by the Head of Procurement

Date: 17/5/23

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 17/5/23

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqIA carried out: NO

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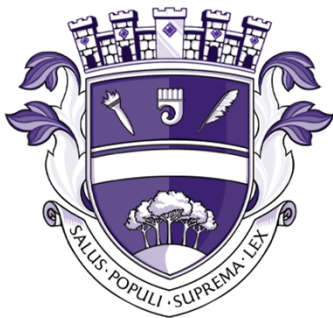
Contact: Alex Dewsnap, Director of Corporate Resources and Transformation, alex.dewsnap@harrow.gov.uk

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO

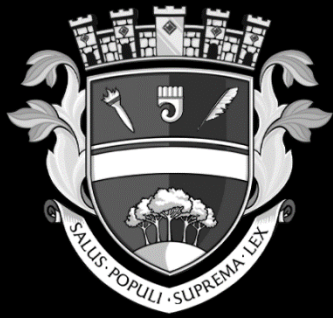
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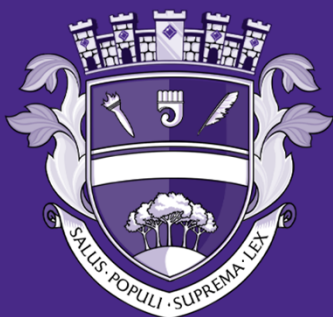
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